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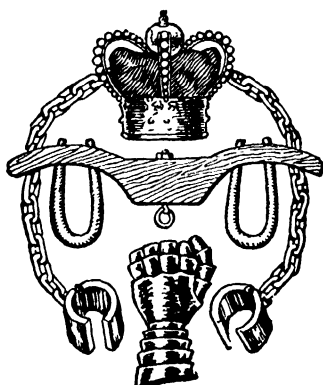
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PEOPLE IN

Colonies



# People in Colonies

*By*

KUMAR GOSHAL

*Author of*

THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

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To My Grandmother  
Giribala Devi



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## INTRODUCTION

**O**F THE TWO BILLION human beings on the earth, one and a half billion are poor, incredibly poor. This number does not include the poor people who live in industrialized countries, such as the United States, Britain, France, and Holland. These one and a half billion live mostly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

It is hard for an American to conceive of such poverty as is the lot of these people. There are slums in the United States. There are poverty-stricken people in the South. But the poorest of the poor in the United States would be considered rich, would be envied by the majority of the Asians, the Africans, and the Latin Americans.

Millions of people in these countries are normally on the borderline of starvation. The slightest dislocation of their economy kills off millions of them as though atomic bombs had been dropped among them.

Ponder this carefully: In the twentieth century three-fourths of the world's population are as destitute as their ancestors were a thousand years ago.

Man is a tool-using animal. He has ever been in quest of more efficient tools to free him from material insecurity. After a long search, he has at last found the technique of abundant production. But this technique remains confined to a relatively small part of the world, and benefits less than a quarter of the world's population.

How does the rest of the world live?

To illustrate how they lived before the second world war: One often read how "benevolently" the Dutch ruled Indonesia. On the rubber plantations in Indonesia, workers were bound under contract for three-year terms. They were so ill-paid that,

before their term expired, they were heavily in debt to the company. To repay this debt, they had to sign up for another three years. Thus a constant and cheap supply of labor was assured to Dutch plantation owners. The workers were lucky to eat two meals a day, consisting of a bowl of rice flavored with a spoonful of dried fish. Plantation managers received big salaries and lived free of rent in charming houses set in spacious grounds. If they could increase production by squeezing the last ounce of energy out of the peasants, they received bonuses running as high as 150 thousand dollars a year. The average income of an Indonesian was 15 dollars a year.

Chop suey—as adapted to western palates—is a very popular dish in America. Those who relish Chinese food grow rapturous over the subtle flavor the Chinese cooks obtain by adding very few and very finely sliced pieces of meat to a pot of vegetables. But in China the custom of using few, thin slices of meat in vegetable dishes developed not for the added flavor but because the Chinese rarely could afford meat, and had to make a little go a long way. The average wage of an industrial worker in China was eight cents a day. A farmer, when he was not in debt—which he usually was—earned the munificent sum of \$1.60 a month. Every year, about two million people died of starvation. In 1935, 29,000 dead bodies of men, women and children were picked up in the streets of Shanghai alone. All this was in pre-war days. What is happening today is too gruesome to print.

The Philippine Islands were given freedom in July, 1946, and one might wonder what the Filipinos are still kicking about. For one thing, most Filipinos are farmers, cultivating land as tenants on large estates. Customarily, the owner appropriated 60 per cent of the produce. Agrarian wages before the war were as low as fifteen cents a day. Freedom has not changed this condition.

Ever heard the words *mui tsai*? The people of British Malay and Hongkong knew them very well. They stood for little Chinese girls who were sold by destitute families as domestic

servants without wages. Often they were bought by owners of bordellos. The British government finally decided to do something for the *mui tsais*. They registered them.

Africa is known as the "Dark Continent," perhaps because so little news from there percolates into the outside world. But trouble is brewing there, and one of these days Africa will land in the headlines. It will be well to remember then that an African family with an annual income of 20 dollars is considered well-to-do. Leonard Barnes, once a colonial official himself, wrote in 1939: "We know that a labourer will undertake on his bare feet a journey of several days to reach employment whose remuneration is 10s. a month, a journey of weeks for 15s. a month, and a journey of months for the 23s. 6d a month, which he can get at the Eldorado of the Northern Rhodesian Copper Mines.\* Incidentally, the mine authorities have found that it took from six weeks to two months of special feeding to bring these recruits to a condition of physical fitness for a normal day's work in the mine."<sup>1</sup>

In the West Indies the average laborer before the war earned twenty to forty cents a day—when there was work. The average number of working days was two hundred a year. Many children in Antigua ate nothing more nourishing than cornmeal pap with a dash of sugar.

Everybody knows that the people of India are some of the poorest people on earth. Many believe that the British have done a Herculean job of improving the lot of the Indians. Here is a short, short story that tells in a nutshell how the people are helped by the government:

On April 3, 1946, the well known writer R. Palme Dutt went to visit a Rural Uplift Exhibition held on the grounds of the British Viceroy's palace in New Delhi. The exhibition featured samples of up-to-date farming machinery, better seeds, methods of land reclamation, modern housing and farm buildings, and plumbing. Quite innocently Palme Dutt asked the proud director of the exhibition what was being done to bring all this to the

\* 1 shilling = 20 cents.

750,000 villages of India, where 90 per cent of the people live. "Alas, nothing!" replied the director. "There is no money. This is only a model exhibition. We cannot even bring our exhibition to the villages."

There was more to the exhibition. In one section there was temptingly displayed a model minimum balanced diet, with current prices, for an industrial worker. Dutt asked the director how much the diet would cost an industrial worker for his family of five, at the present Delhi prices. The question was, perhaps, unkind to the director. For he was obliged to admit that the diet would cost 45 dollars a month, while in New Delhi skilled workers earned a maximum of 18 dollars and unskilled workers no more than 8 dollars a month, including wartime special allowances. Milk was selling in New Delhi at fourteen cents a quart.

In the summer of 1946, there was a revolution in Bolivia. No wonder. According to statistics gathered by the C.T.A.L.—the Latin American trade union federation—in normal times the average hourly wage of a United States worker in the ten most common occupations was \$1.33, while that of a Bolivian worker was nine cents. In terms of purchasing power, the U.S. worker could buy with one hour's income 7.8 kilos \* of bread, or 2.0 kilos of beef, or 53.4 eggs; the Bolivian worker could buy only 0.3 kilos of bread or 0.2 kilos of beef or 2.9 eggs. The majority of the Bolivians worked on land owned by a few land barons, were paid a few cents a day, and labored from "sun to sun."

Many travelers have wondered why in the fields and mines of Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru, American Indian workers constantly chewed *caccha*, a mixture of coca leaves, lime, and ashes. When Indians from Peru went to work in the mines of Chile, the mine owners actually asked permission of their government to import *caccha*. The reason for this was simple. An ILO publication of 1938 reported that "coca produces an anesthesia which suppresses the feeling of hunger. . . . All the hygienists who have studied the use of coca among the Indians

\* 1 kilogram = 2.2046 lbs.



agree that its effects are profoundly devastating. . . . Generally the Indian chews daily one hundred grams of coca, which according to investigators from Peru represents *3.88 weekly grams of pure cocaine.*"<sup>2</sup>

American soldiers who have been to the Pacific, to India, Burma, and China during the second world war, have seen something of this poverty. They have seen many of these poor people feebly trying to cheat death by foraging for food in refuse heaps and garbage cans, by eating roots, grass and weeds. They have known of thousands of women committing suicide for lack of even a few rags to cover their nakedness. An American writer traveling in India not so long ago, ate a banana and threw the peel out of the train window to a flock of monkeys running alongside the slowly moving train. Before the monkeys could reach the banana peel, a crowd of children rushed forward, fighting and clutching for it, and ravenously devoured the grimy fragments they snatched from each other's hands.

In Egypt American seamen saw children barely in their teens, loading ships twelve hours a day without pausing for lunch—all for the price of a small bowl of rice as wages, barely enough to keep their bones covered with skin.

In other parts of Africa, in Asia, in the South Pacific islands, they saw people living in mud huts, their bodies covered with filthy rags, vermin crawling over their festering sores, flies clustering on the children's pus-filled eyes; eating earth, grasshoppers, grubs, grass, and leaves; begging, selling themselves and their families into slavery for the least amount of food necessary to keep them alive—or half alive.

This is poverty—stark, degrading, deadening poverty. Ironically enough, the countries where these people live are often potentially rich. Nature has supplied them with an abundance of resources—coal, oil, iron ore deposits, tungsten, mica, bauxite, chromite, lead, gold, silver, and other precious minerals. There are millions of acres of cultivable land. Many of them have magnificent rivers that can be dammed to generate power. And there are hundreds of millions of pairs of hands willing to

transform all these potential riches into real wealth. But the natural resources remain underground or are controlled for export by foreign monopolies; the cultivable land remains idle while people hunt for food like desperate animals.

The major task of the world today is to discover and eliminate whatever keeps these hands empty and unoccupied, whatever prevents them from utilizing the idle land and the untapped resources for the betterment of the people.

Who are these one and a half billion "have-nots"? These are the people living in colonies and semi-colonies. More than six hundred million of them live in direct colonies, ruled by alien powers, their economy controlled by the industrialists and financiers of the ruling countries. India, Burma, Indonesia, Indo-China, Puerto Rico, and most of the countries of Africa are examples of such colonies. The remaining millions live in countries outwardly independent but by no means sovereign. Foreign powers indirectly control their governments, and their economy is largely controlled by foreign capital. China, Iraq, Transjordan, most Latin American countries, and now the Philippines, are examples of semi-colonial countries.

So the problem can be rephrased as the colonial problem, and its solution must be an integral part of any plan for world peace.

A deluge of peace plans is flooding America today—which is understandable. More than ever, Americans want peace. Not so much because they fully understand their relationship to the fundamental world problems that lead nations to war, but because they have been subjected to a number of severe and spectacular jolts within a short span of time. There have been two world wars in one generation—the second far deadlier than the first—and one world-wide depression. As though carefully stage-managed, the second world war came to a melodramatic end with the bursting of atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While the rumbling of more atomic bombs echoed over Bikini lagoon, a highly vocal minority in the United States

seemed anxious to precipitate a third—and infinitely more calamitous—world war in the near future.

After the second world war, the American public was psychologically ripe for peace plans. Peace-planners sprang up overnight. The air was full of solemn discussions over how to avoid war. Bookstalls displayed dozens of blueprints for world peace. Some experts insisted there must immediately be a World Government, to which all nations would surrender some of their sovereignty. Others plugged for various regional groupings of nations. Some stood for One World; others declared the inevitability of Two Worlds, somehow balanced to maintain peace. Most vociferous were those awed by the atomic bomb. They demanded international control of atomic power, believing that world peace could be established by world control alone.

To the colonial people these peace-planners were suspect. They noticed that with rare exception hawkers of peace programs took little note of them in their calculations. It was not that the subject peoples completely disagreed with all these plans—in a few they found some good. But in general they appeared to be nothing more than a game of reshuffling the political relationships of the countries on a map of the world with singular disregard for the economic plight and political aspirations of the colonial and semi-colonial people.

Consider some of the post-war happenings in the colonial countries, while American leaders were engrossed in charting a war-less world.

The biggest post-war problem was hunger. By the summer of 1946, hundreds of millions of people in Europe, Africa, and Asia were facing death by starvation. The horrifying facts were there for all to see. Americans emphasized the plight of the Germans and Japanese, for the political connotations relating to them were obvious. If the former enemies got too near the starvation level, social as well as political revolution might break out. But the agony of the starving millions in India and

Africa went largely unheeded. With the exception of a few world leaders like Pearl Buck and Paul Robeson, influential persons did nothing effective. They all did the correct thing, of course. They duly but briefly noted in their columns and their editorials and their radio broadcasts the fact of food shortages in these countries and recommended relief. But they never followed through until relief had been supplied. And they most conspicuously neglected to analyze and to fight for a solution of the fundamental economic and political reasons for food shortage in countries like India.

In the spring of 1945, the United Nations charter was drawn in San Francisco. During the conference, while the power and scope of the Trusteeship Council was being discussed, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov recommended that the purpose of the Council should be to lead the countries placed in its care to eventual independence. Only Carlos P. Romulo of the Philippines supported Molotov. Past experience had prepared the people in the colonies to expect unyielding opposition from the Western European imperialist powers to the inclusion of the word "independence" in the Trusteeship Charter; but they were dismayed to find the opposition being led by the United States representative, Edward R. Stettinius!

Colonial people knew that the United States itself was not free from the taint of imperialism. But they also recalled that, during the course of the war, American leaders like Wendell Willkie, Henry Wallace, and Sumner Welles spoke up consistently in behalf of the colonial people. They remembered that it was President Roosevelt who insisted that the clause in the Atlantic Charter "respecting the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live" had universal application; whereas Winston Churchill declared that it did not affect the fundamental colonial policies of the British government, and the heads of other imperialist governments remained discreetly silent. And they did not forget how the American government had always pointed with pride to its promise of independence to the Philippines.

Naturally, therefore, colonial people blinked their eyes in disbelief when they found Edward Stettinius plugging away doggedly for the word "self-government," equating it with "independence." Stettinius insisted that "self-government" really meant "independence," yet he never explained why he so adamantly objected to the word "independence," especially when that word meant so much to hundreds of millions of people. Most bewildering of all to the colonial people was the lack of any vigorous or sustained support given to their cause in San Francisco.

A case in point is Indonesia. On August 17, 1945, the seventy million people of Indonesia declared their independence. They had every right to do so, morally and realistically. Morally, the Dutch never had any right to rule over them; realistically, it was when they were weak and divided that the Dutch conquered them, nearly three hundred and fifty years ago. When the Dutch in turn were weak, after the second world war, the Indonesians simply took back what legitimately belonged to them—their freedom.

Here was an historic occasion: one of the oldest colonial countries liberating itself as a result of the war against the Axis. During that war liberal leaders everywhere had urged the colonial people to support the war on the ground that victory over the Axis would mean liberation for them, too. But what happened actually when the Indonesians did declare their independence?

Since Holland was too weakened by the war against Nazi Germany to forcibly recover her prized possession, Britain went to her rescue. It was fortunate for the Dutch that the British had a base of operations in India, whence large numbers of Indian and British troops could be quickly sent to Indonesia.

The proclaimed purpose of the British expeditionary force was to disarm the Japanese. But in that task the newly formed Indonesian Republican Government was already well advanced. Why, then, did Britain incur the heavy cost of transporting these troops to Indonesia?

The Indonesians did not have long to wait for the answer. It was against them that the British forces began to fight. General Christison went so far as to demand of the Japanese commanding officer that Japanese troops must help the British forces to keep the Indonesians down for Holland. He even declared that any Japanese refusing to aid the British in their war against the Indonesians would be considered "war criminals." This was a new and singularly revealing definition of "war criminals."

In this attempt to restore imperialism by force in Indonesia, Britain was aided by the United States. British troops were supplied with American lend-lease arms, ammunition, and even Red Cross material. Indonesian leaders were not much surprised to find the British forces attacking their people with guns, tanks, and planes; but they were shocked by the "Made in USA" labels on the weapons. When they protested to the American government over their radio, Secretary of State James Byrnes requested the British to please remove the labels from the American weapons before using them against the Indonesians! The United States even trained and equipped ten thousand Dutch marines in Norfolk, Virginia, and hastened them to Indonesia in American ships.

Imperialist propaganda had tirelessly repeated that if freedom were granted to colonial peoples, there would be uncontrollable chaos and bloody civil war in the colonies. Yet, as they declared their freedom, all Indonesian political parties were united and the Republican Government was solidly supported by the people. Ill-armed Indonesians, many of them in their 'teens, with some weapons taken from the Japanese and others made of old-fashioned swords and scimitars and sharpened bamboo sticks, were fighting the combined forces of the British, the Dutch, and the Japanese. Only a fierce, united desire for freedom could have made the Indonesians strong enough to hold out so long against such great odds.

The reaction of American leaders to all this was illuminating. Did they joyfully welcome this newcomer to the ranks of the

free peoples of the world? Not at all. With a few notable exceptions, they were still hypnotized by the dazzling "peach-colored clouds" rising from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No one, of course, begrudged them their genuinely worthwhile preoccupation with the problems arising from the discovery of the atomic bomb. Yet, they could have diverted a little of their attention to the very historic occasion of a colonial people asserting their freedom after more than three centuries of bondage.

There was no sustained protest against the callous breach of pledge by several members of the United Nations. A few protest meetings were held here and there in the United States, but Americans in general cleared their collective conscience by mildly clucking their tongues, and continued with their plans for world government and control of atomic energy. It is true that the British government set up machinery for negotiations between the Dutch government and the Indonesian leaders. But that this was only a camouflage could have been seen by a cursory glance at the newspapers. For behind the curtain of negotiations, war against the Indonesians went on. In the spring of 1947 it was still being carried on, and few voices could be heard in support of the Indonesians.

Soon after the defeat of Japan, punitive action was taken against the people of Malaya, Indo-China, Burma, the Philippines, and Palestine. With the exception of Palestine, the other countries received scarcely any attention from Americans. Even the issue of Palestine was discussed out of focus. The suffering of the Jewish people in Europe was so unbelievably tragic that Palestine was put forward largely as a refuge for a hundred thousand Jews. At most, Palestine was discussed pro and con as a national homeland for the Jews. Double-talk aside, Palestine is a colony, and the Palestinian problem is part of the larger problem of colonial freedom. Since this point was seldom made, discussions over the future of Palestine produced more confusion than clarity.

And so it went through the winter of 1946-47, a year and a

half after the defeat of the Axis powers. While there was a lot of talk going on in America about preventing future wars, little was being done to stop the war then going on in such countries as Indonesia and Indo-China. Even less was being done to eliminate the war on the famine front, where food was being used more as a weapon than as relief.

Architects of world government neglected to point out that the structure of a government springs from the economy of a country, and that a world government would be possible only when the glaring maladjustments in world economy were remedied. Those who were so anxious to prevent the mass slaughter an atomic war would entail did little to prevent the mass slaughter imminently threatened by widespread famine, from which the people in colonies were suffering the most. The sum total of all this spelled cynicism toward peace-planners in the minds of the colonial people and confusion in the minds of Americans.

Indicative of this confusion was the way the American people judged the British government's negotiations with the Indian leaders and the Egyptian government, during 1946-47. Analyses of these negotiations will be taken up later on in this book in their proper sequence, but a few points are worth noting here.

The British government obviously attached tremendous importance to the publicity value of these two political moves. They were expected to prove to the Americans that the roaring British lion had been transformed into a gentle, harmless lamb. In the *New York Post* of July 15, 1946, Member of Parliament Michael Foote wrote that Britain had "sought full honorable settlement in India" and "a free, honorable treaty with sovereign Egypt." He went on to express the hope that "those in charge of British information services in the U.S. will be instructed to make their appeal on the basis of such facts."

It was disconcerting for the colonial people to observe that Americans in general swallowed whole Michael Foote's interpretation of the British moves. They were accepted without hesitation as bona fide and generous offers of independence to India



and of equality to Egypt. Yet, one did not have to be an Anglophobe to look upon the British government's proposals with at least mild skepticism. Americans might have questioned how these offers to India and Egypt squared with the imperialist policy Britain was pursuing in Greece, in Palestine, and in the entire Middle East. They doubted Britain's good faith when the British government suggested a four-way partition of Palestine as a solution of the Palestinian problem, but they failed to observe that this solution had a striking resemblance to the underlying principle of the proposal to India. They never inquired into the reason for the Egyptian Nationalists' demand for "the freedom of Egypt *and the Sudan*." They completely overlooked the fact that Egyptian "sovereignty" was a mockery so long as Britain controlled the irrigation works on the upper Nile in the Sudan, upon which Egyptian agriculture was entirely dependent.

All this was naturally confusing because Britain appeared to be simultaneously following an intensely imperialistic policy and liquidating her Empire! Britain was dealing with a "sovereign Egypt"—while the Egyptians were struggling to achieve the freedom of Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The British offer to Palestine was being declared a fraud—while an offer to India with similar potentialities was being hailed as a sincere and genuine offer of independence! Even American liberals never tried to reconcile these contradictions in British policy; they simply ignored them.

To understand world politics today, to really plan for world peace, it is essential to understand the colonial problem. Consider the following figures: Seven imperialist powers, with a home population of less than four hundred million, directly or indirectly control the destinies of nearly one and a half billion people living in colonial and semi-colonial countries. The home territories of the imperialist powers amount to about three and a half million square miles, while the territories they control

amount to about thirty-five million square miles in area. In other words, seven imperialist powers with about one-fifth of the world's population, and inhabiting about one-twelfth of the earth's habitable surface, control the lives of nearly two-thirds of the world's population, inhabiting almost three-fourths of the earth's surface.

But these one and a half billion people are no longer willing passively to accept the status quo. Among the dominant forces destined to influence the course of world history must be counted the increasingly articulate demands of the colonial and semi-colonial people for freedom and democracy.

Peace plans that do not inquire into the reasons for the existing political and economic unbalance are doomed to failure. This unbalance inevitably breeds conflict. Wars have been fought for the conquest of colonies. Wars have been fought over their redivision by the imperialist powers. The second world war, as a matter of fact, was fought partly for the redivision of colonial possessions. Even now wars are being waged by imperialist powers to maintain control over rebellious colonies.

In planning intelligently for a peaceful world, it would be worth while to get acquainted with the people of the more outstanding colonies in order to understand the colonial problem. This is the story of why and how they fell under foreign domination, how they have fared since then, their struggle for political and economic freedom, the internal problems they will have to solve, and the way they might solve them when they are free to mold their lives without outside interference. These people seldom make the headlines in the American press; nevertheless, on the fulfillment of their aspirations depends to a large extent the establishment of enduring peace on earth.

## ❀ Chapter I ❀

### WHY COLONIES WERE ACQUIRED

**T**O THE EUROPEANS in the fifteenth century, Asia was a glamorous land, a treasure-house of all kinds of goods for which they had already developed a taste.

Since the time of the Crusades, silks and cotton textiles, ivory and precious stones, drugs and perfumes, exquisite handicraft work of every description, and, above all, spices, had been entering the European market by way of Italy. But the long haul of Eastern goods to Europe through the Italian ports shot their prices sky-high. Merchants in other parts of Europe longed to break the power of the Italian middlemen by finding a way to trade directly with the producers in the East. This desire to find a direct route to the treasures of the East stimulated the great voyages of discovery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Another reason for the voyages was the need for more gold and silver by the merchants and kings of Western Europe. The supply of these precious metals as media of exchange lagged behind the increase in commerce. Those were the days of constant warfare in Europe, and kings needed more and more "gold or silver to maintain their courts, to increase their power, to hire soldiers, to pay for wars."<sup>3</sup>

Spain and Portugal took the lead in this search. Spain failed to reach the Indies, but discovered the gold and silver mines of America. Portugal found an all-water route to the Indies when Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope and landed in the port of Calicut, India, in 1498.

As a result of the voyages of discovery, there was a vast expansion of trade in Western Europe. "Where Venice had bought 420,000 pounds of pepper every year from the Sultan

of Egypt, now *one* boat on its journey homeward to Portugal had 200,000 pounds in its hold." <sup>4</sup> Enormous profits were made by Portuguese traders. Vasco da Gama's first voyage to India yielded a profit of 6000 per cent! It was estimated that the king's coffers received 750 thousand dollars a year net profit.

The prospect of such fabulous profits was intoxicating. Portugal, Spain, Holland, England, and France set up merchant companies and sent out ships sailing in all directions. There were "East India" companies and "West India" companies and "Levant" companies and "African" companies. These merchants dotted the coastal regions of India, Malaya, and Africa with their trading posts and warehouses.

Aside from the fact that European countries were at that time in constant warfare among themselves, the very competition for trade was itself a breeding ground for conflict. It became necessary for the merchant companies to fortify their trading posts and carry well-trained mercenary soldiers both for warfare among themselves and for protection from the well-organized piracy prevalent in those days.

It was soon obvious to the merchant companies that even greater profits could be realized by eliminating competition in and securing a monopoly of a particular trade. In their home countries they kept competitors out by securing exclusive trade privileges from their respective governments. On the high seas they fought among themselves to capture one another's cargo. In the neighborhood of their trading posts they tried by various means to maintain a monopoly of the goods they were taking to Europe. The Dutch, for example, paid "pensions" of over fifteen thousand dollars to some rulers of Malaysia to destroy cloves and nutmegs in several islands and cultivate them only in Amboyna, where the merchants from Holland were secure.

Eventually, the desire for monopoly led them to outright conquest of the territories where they first went as traders. Thus the British began the conquest of India to monopolize the trade in Indian textiles, silks, brocades, and other products. The Dutch began nibbling at Indonesia from the very beginning

of their contact with Asia, in order to capture the spice trade. The French tried to conquer India but lost out to the British. Spain and Portugal drained South America of its gold and silver, until they were thrown out during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. All of them gorged themselves with profit by monopolizing the products of their respective colonies.

1776 was a memorable year. In that year the American colonies declared their independence and Adam Smith published his *Wealth of Nations*. Also, on March 11, 1776, “. . . a Steam Engine constructed upon Mr. Watt’s new Principles was set to work at Bloomfield Colliery . . . in the Presence of a Number of Scientific Gentlemen whose Curiosity was excited to see the first movements of so singular and so powerful a Machine . . . by this Example the Doubts of the Inexperienced are dispelled and the Importance and Usefulness of the Invention is finally decided. . . .”<sup>5</sup> Thus was heralded the dawn of the Industrial Revolution which was to alter profoundly the relationship between colonies and colony-owning countries. Eventually it led to a mad scramble for greater colonial possessions by the highly industrialized countries and for the division of the world among the imperialist powers.

By the turn of the century, doubts of the inexperienced were indeed dispelled and the importance and usefulness of the invention were abundantly decided. The era of large-scale production had begun.

During the nineteenth century one country after another in the Western world became industrialized. Factories began to pour out a constant stream of goods. To facilitate the circulation of manufactures, roads were improved, transportation and communications systems were modernized. With the modernization of the transportation and communications systems, it became possible for industry to bring all its production necessities together in one place. With rapid technological advance, it became possible for mass production of goods at a decreasing cost per unit while volume of production increased.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century the time was ripe for monopoly to enter the field. It was obvious that the larger the scale of production the lower would be the cost of production, and profits would increase proportionately. It was also obvious that in a competitive market the large-scale producer would put out of business the small-scale producer. Thus large numbers of small-scale producers were gradually replaced by a few large-scale producers.

As industries expanded and faced less competition, industrialists realized what the merchants trading in Asian goods in an earlier era had realized—the possibility of increasing their profits by monopoly in their respective spheres. Industrialists could thus regulate the production of goods and thereby dictate the price at which the goods would be sold. More than that: Those who had a monopoly control over their raw material as well as the market for the finished product would be able to reap greater profits than ever. Inevitably, therefore, giant monopolies developed in the highly industrialized countries, with power to regulate production, dictate prices, and garner tremendous profits. But there were several flies in this ointment.

Large-scale monopoly increased the productive forces of industry more than ever before. Soon the productive power of industry outdistanced the purchasing power of the people at home. They were faced with the alternative of either reducing their production to fit the domestic market—which meant losing much extra profit—or finding foreign markets for their surplus goods. This was problem number one.

As the output of industries increased, the hungry machines had to be fed greater quantities of raw materials. Many of these had to be imported from abroad, for not even the largest country, most generously endowed by nature, was self-sufficient in raw materials. Industrialists had to look for sources of material outside their home countries, and to find ways and means of controlling them to insure a steady supply. This was problem number two.

Giant industries had to solve these two problems if they were

to make the maximum amount of profit. They could try to unload their surplus goods on one another's countries. But in each country there were industrialists who had made themselves secure from just such competition by creating high tariff walls.

They found the solution in colonies.

Britain was the first country to feel the pinch of a restricted home market. But that was not difficult for Britain to overcome. She already had considerable colonial possessions. Besides, for quite a while Britain was the only country turning out industrial products. As long as other European countries remained unindustrialized, she continued to smelt other people's iron and weave other people's cloth.

But a time came after the middle of the nineteenth century when France, Germany, the United States, and other countries began to catch up with British industries. They set up tariff walls to give their "infant industries" a breathing spell, a chance to grow. Tariff walls were raised higher in the United States after the Civil War. Russia raised hers by degrees from 1877 onward, Germany in 1879, and France in 1881.

All these countries observed the benefits Britain was receiving from her existing colonies. France had had a taste of the fruits of colonial exploitation in the past. Britain, of course, was an old hand at the game.

So it happened that, around the last quarter of the nineteenth century, greedy fingers stretched out simultaneously from the highly industrialized countries and gouged out empires for themselves all over the world.

Conquest of colonies and control over semi-colonies solved for the time being the problem of markets for surplus goods as well as the problem of finding sources of raw material. These industrially backward countries often proved rich in all kinds of produce. From them went to the imperialist countries a steady stream of cotton for the textile mills, phosphates to fertilize the soil, coffee, cocoa, tea, sugar, coconuts and coconut oil, rubber, tin, petroleum, gold and silver, and precious minerals of all kinds. As advancing technology called for newer

substances, those too were found in the colonies and semi-colonies; and the stream was swelled by bauxite, chromite, magnesite, tungsten, mica, and other such products. Lately, Britain has even found large quantities of thorium, one source of atomic energy, in India, and the Belgian Congo has become the greatest source of uranium.

In the imperialist countries this produce was transformed into consumer goods, and the colonials helped to absorb the surplus. Business boomed as never before. Gigantic enterprises created by monopolies reaped profits beyond their dreams. This raised another problem for the industrialists—the problem of surplus capital. And this, too, the colonies helped solve.

The super-profits earned by big business had to be reinvested—at the highest rate of profit obtainable. It was not that the home countries had exhausted all opportunities of profitable investment. Not at all. Even the most highly industrialized countries still needed more and better roads and houses and railways and hospitals and many improvements. Only about ten years ago the President of the United States was bewailing the fact that, in the richest country in the world, one-third of the people were ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed. Yet surplus capital went to colonial territories because the rate of profit was higher.

In economically backward colonial countries capital was scarce, the price of land was relatively low, and labor was cheap. The returns from capital investment in these countries often were fabulous.

Besides being highly profitable, capital investment in colonial countries itself helped dispose of surplus goods from imperialist countries. The development of mines and plantations in the colonies, the construction of railways to transport the products to the nearest ports, the ships necessary for the two-way transportation, all required the use of vast quantities of machinery and other goods which the home country alone could supply. Thus the interests of the investor and the manufacturer coincided in owning or controlling economically backward lands.



This is finance capital, the very essence of twentieth-century imperialism. In his classic book on imperialism, J. A. Hobson wrote as early as 1902: "Imperialism is the endeavor of the great controllers of industry to broaden the channel for the flow of their surplus wealth by seeking foreign markets and foreign investments to take off the goods and capital they cannot sell or use at home." <sup>6</sup>

Once started on the road to the conquest or control of economically backward areas, imperialist powers found other reasons for adding to their possessions. To hold on to profitable colonies, other territories had to be conquered to supply fueling stations for ships, and strategic military and air bases. Still more territories had to be annexed to prevent them from falling into the hands of rival imperialist powers, even though the first power might not immediately gain through the new acquisition.

The motive power behind the conquest of colonies, then, has been economic. One is astonished to read in the press that there are still people, like Herbert Matthews of the *New York Times*, who believe that Britain acquired an empire at least partly in "fits of absence of mind"; that imperialist powers have, in the course of time, sincerely come to look upon their colonial subjects as wards for whom they hold these territories in trust; and that absolution can be given to one colonial power by comparing its more "enlightened policy" with the "unenlightened policy" of another.

It is true that, during the last three hundred and fifty years, there have been outspoken opponents of imperialism in the imperialist countries themselves. But they did not dictate the foreign policies of their governments. A more reliable guide to the reasons for the expansionist policies followed by the imperialist countries will be found in the statements of those who profited by such expansion.

For example, as early as September 28, 1687, Sir Josiah Child advised his colleagues of the East India Company to lay "the foundations of a large and well-grounded sure English

Dominion in India for all time to come.”<sup>7</sup> Similarly, John De-Witt, Grand Pensionary of the Netherlands, in his *Political Maxims* linked colonies with commerce and industry as the “trinity responsible for Dutch power.”<sup>8</sup>

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Holland and Britain were looked upon with envy by other European powers. There was keen rivalry for colonial possessions, openly encouraged by statesmen and businessmen alike. Richelieu “looked with envy on the Dutch, whose trade with the East and West Indies was so lucrative,” and “he considered naval power and colonial empire indispensable features” of France’s economic betterment.<sup>9</sup>

In the nineteenth century a host of historians, economists, explorers, businessmen, and politicians in the imperialist countries carried on an incessant campaign for colonial expansion. Sir George Grey, John Seely and J. A. Froude in England; Alfred Rambaud, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, Delcassé and Jules Ferry in France; Roscher, Bucher, Treitschke, Wilhelm Hübbschleiden, and Bismarck in Germany; and many others in Europe agitated for an aggressive imperialist policy. In Germany, a powerful group of merchants and explorers organized the Kolonialverein to carry on their imperialistic propaganda. Its counterpart in Britain was the Royal Colonial Institute headed by Viscount Bury.

Roscher asserted, “Germany must expand on the sea and over the sea into foreign lands,” and Treitschke proclaimed, “Every virile nation has established colonial power.” Leroy-Beaulieu exhorted his countrymen, “France has been a great colonial power, . . . she can and should become one again.” Gambetta coolly explained that French expansion was “necessary for the increase of our material prosperity.” Jules Ferry, in the preface to his book on *Tonkin and the Mother Country*, published in 1890, bluntly stated: “Colonial policy is the daughter of industrial policy. . . . European powers of consumption are saturated. New masses of consumers must be made to arise in other parts of the globe, else we shall put modern

society into bankruptcy and prepare for the dawn of the twentieth century a cataclysmic social liquidation of which one cannot calculate the consequences.”<sup>10</sup>

At a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute in June, 1876, members cheered Lt. Cameron when he declared, “I hope the day is not far distant when we shall see the Union Jack flying permanently in the centre of Africa.” Joseph Chamberlain frankly admitted “The Empire is commerce.” In 1893, Lord Lugard, a representative of the Royal Niger Company, wrote with disarming frankness: “It is inherent in a great colonial and commercial empire like ours that we go forward or backward. . . . We are accountable to posterity that opportunities which now present themselves of extending the sphere of our industrial enterprise are not neglected, for the opportunities now offered will never recur again.”<sup>11</sup> Be it recorded that in 1900, Lord Lugard became the Governor of Nigeria.

Cecil Rhodes epitomized the expansionist spirit of late nineteenth-century imperialism: “The world is nearly all parcelled out, and what there is left of it is being divided up, conquered, and colonized. To think of these stars that you see overhead at night, these vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could; I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and yet so far.”<sup>12</sup>

Bearing the above in mind, one might give a passing glance to the moral justifications that gradually enveloped the more mundane reasons for colonial acquisition. Such justifications developed largely out of a desire to gain public support by twisting national pride into jingoism. And it was necessary to mobilize public opinion because wars for imperialist expansion were becoming large-scale and more expensive.

The name of Henry Morton Stanley has been glamorized by his adventures in “darkest Africa,” and by “Dr. Livingstone, I presume?” Less well known is his indefatigable propaganda for the conquest of Africa. Having been a newspaper man, Stanley knew how to agitate with a judicious mixture of cupidity and evangelism. In a speech before the Man-

chester Chamber of Commerce in 1884, he said: "There are forty millions of people beyond the gateway of the Congo, and the cotton spinners of Manchester are waiting to clothe them. Birmingham foundries are glowing with the red metal that will presently be made into iron work for them and the trinkets that shall adorn those dusky bosoms, and the ministers of Christ are zealous to bring them, the poor benighted heathen, into the Christian fold."<sup>13</sup>

Cecil Rhodes himself was not averse to claiming divine dispensation for his insatiable ambition. "I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race . . .," he said. "If there be a God, I think what He would like me to do is to paint as much of the map of Africa British red as possible."<sup>14</sup>

But the most eloquent call to imperialist expansion was trumpeted by Rudyard Kipling in 1899—the heyday of imperialism—when he urged the empire builders to

*Take up the White Man's Burden—  
Send forth the best ye breed—  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need;  
To wait in heavy harness,  
On fluttered fold and wild—  
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,  
Half-devil and half-child.*

Other countries were not slow to pick up the White Man's Burden theme. "The superior races have a right as regards inferior races," said Jules Ferry of France. "They have a right because they have a duty. They have the duty of civilizing inferior races."<sup>15</sup> If Britain was determined to carry the White Man's Burden, France was prepared to spread the *mission civilisatrice*. Friedrich Fabri came along in 1879 with the need for disseminating German Kultur "among the backward races." And there were others too numerous to mention.

The Europeans were later joined by the United States and Japan. As early as 1898, Republican Senator Albert J. Bev-

eridge told a group of Boston businessmen: "American factories are making more than the American people can use; American soil is producing more than they can consume. Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours. And we will get it as our mother (England) has told us how. We will establish trading-posts throughout the world as distributing points for American products. We will cover the ocean with our merchant marine. We will build a navy to the measure of our greatness. Great colonies governing themselves, flying our flag and trading with us, will grow about our posts of trade."<sup>16</sup>

In a slightly more diplomatic vein, President Taft of the United States elucidated U.S. foreign policy thus: "While our foreign policy should not be turned a hair's breadth from the straight path of justice, it may well be made to include active intervention to secure for our merchandise and our capitalists opportunity for profitable investment."<sup>17</sup>

General Baron Tanaka in Japan drew up a blueprint for Japanese war on Manchuria. Ginjiro Fujiwara, head of the Mitsui paper monopoly, lucidly explained Japanese expansionist policy. "No matter how diligent the Japanese may be," he said, "no matter how superior their technical development or industrial administration may be, there will be no hope for Japan's trade expansion if there is no adequate force to back it. Now the greatest of forces is military preparedness founded on the Army and Navy. We can safely expand abroad and engage in various enterprises, if we are confident of protection."<sup>18</sup>

And so through the last fifty years there were added to the phraseology of imperialism the doctrines of the U.S.A.'s Manifest Destiny and the American Century, Italy's spreading of civilization into Abyssinia, Germany's Aryan supremacy, Japan's building of an Asiatic Co-prosperity sphere, and Churchill's mission of the English-speaking peoples.

The quotations given above are far from exhaustive. They have been given in the hope that readers will notice the striking similarity in the statements, even though they cover several

different countries and a long period of years. The point is that this similarity is *not* purely coincidental. Both blunt speaking and casuistry are being employed by the imperialist powers even to this day. The very nature of imperialism is such that it is bound to follow a certain pattern in its essentials. This pattern will be clearer as one gets a glimpse of the way imperialism has actually worked.

## ❀ Chapter II ❀

# THE STORY OF COLONIAL CONQUEST

**T**HE CONQUEST of colonies was a grim and sordid affair. It is a tale of treachery, bribery, intrigue, chicanery, broken pledges, and brutal aggression. Conquest has left a deep wound in the hearts of the colonial people, which must be taken into account when dealing with them, and when they are asked to co-operate in building a better world.

Since the story is repetitive, only a few samples need be given here for the reader to detect the symptoms of colonial acquisition. The story of Indonesia—one of the oldest and richest colonies, over which the Dutch were fighting again in 1945–46–47—is typical.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Indonesian civilization was at its peak. The great Empire of Madjapahit, with its capital in eastern Java, ruled over most of Indonesia, the Philippines, and the southeastern part of Asia. It was a well organized and efficient government, with a highly systematized form of taxation, customs, tolls, and internal revenues. The functions of the government were carried on through various departments, including those of Commerce, Public Health and Welfare, Interior, and War.

But it was a feudal empire, similar to the medieval kingdoms of Europe, held together by the allegiance of many vassal princes to the central government in Madjapahit. It was necessarily unstable, with each of the vassal princes waiting for an opportunity to make himself supreme. By the second quarter of the fifteenth century, the Madjapahit Empire began to fall apart.

When the Portuguese arrived early in the sixteenth century, Indonesia was ruled by a number of princes, who were engaged in constant internecine wars. Seeking control of the spice trade, the Portuguese sent an expedition in 1509 against the rising state of Malacca, but were defeated by the Malaccans. But the Portuguese persisted, and in 1511, from their already established base at Goa, in India, Viceroy d'Albuquerque sailed forth with a larger expeditionary force and conquered Malacca. Operating from Malacca, and taking advantage of the dissensions among the princes, the Portuguese gradually extended their power over a considerable part of Indonesia, including the spice-rich Moluccas.

In the latter part of the sixteenth century Spain and Portugal were united, and the Dutch, then subject to Spain, distributed the Spanish trade in Europe. But toward the end of the century the Dutch rebelled and began to harry the Portuguese traders in Indonesia. The Netherlands government chartered the Dutch East India Company in 1602. With direct financial and military aid from the home government, the Dutch quickly ousted the Portuguese from Indonesia. Spain retreated to the Philippines and the Western Hemisphere.

For a while the Dutch had tough competition from the British. The British gradually became occupied with the conquest of India, leaving the Dutch a clear field in Indonesia.

In their conquest of Indonesia the Dutch shrewdly and patiently played one rival prince against another, fomented disruption, put up pretenders to thrones, and shifted sides to suit their convenience. It was through persistent intrigue, occasional bold attacks, and treachery when necessary, that the Dutch succeeded in their purpose.

The Indonesians put up strong resistance, but each prince fought alone against the combined forces of his rival princes and the Dutch, and thereby inevitably lost out. It could not be otherwise because they were at a feudal stage of development, there was no such national consciousness among the Indonesians as the Dutch had already developed, and any united effort



against their European enemy was inconceivable at this stage of history. As Raymond Kennedy has pointed out, "At no time during their colonial expansion in the Indies did the Dutch face anything approximating a united front of native states allied against them."<sup>19</sup> Even then it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the Dutch were able to crush the last vestiges of opposition to their rule.

Constant warfare eventually strained the Dutch East India Company's finances beyond the breaking point, though the trade was highly profitable. In 1798 the Company was liquidated. The Netherlands government took over direct control, and continued the piecemeal conquest of the islands.

But in 1806 the Netherlands lost its own independence, and it seemed that Napoleon would annex to France the Dutch colonial possessions as well. Britain came to the rescue—as she was to do once again one hundred and thirty-four years later. With the consent of the Dutch King, who had fled to England, British Asian forces took over the administration of Indonesia.

Under Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, British Lieutenant-Governor of Java, conquest of Indonesia went on as before. It is worth noting that Stamford Raffles, an expansionist himself, nevertheless characterized the Dutch conquest of Indonesia as "one of the most extraordinary relations of treachery, bribery, massacre and meanness."<sup>20</sup>

In 1818, to the great regret of Stamford Raffles, Indonesia was restored to the Netherlands. Raffles, however, managed to secure Singapore for Britain. By the treaty of 1824 it was generally agreed that the Dutch would have sovereignty over the Indonesian islands, while the British were given a free hand in the rest of the Malay Archipelago.

Safe from rivalry for the time being, the Dutch concentrated all their efforts on expanding and consolidating their position. In 1825 they had their hands full with a revolt in Djokjakarta, which took five years to suppress. The war with the Atjehnese on the northern tip of Sumatra was the longest and one of the bloodiest the Dutch had to fight. The Atjehnese vainly applied

for aid from foreign powers, including Britain and the United States. The British came to an understanding with the Dutch in 1871. For a while it seemed as though American aid would be forthcoming when the American consul in Singapore, Major Studer, drafted a treaty with Atjeh and tried to persuade the admiral of an American fleet in the China Sea to protect the Indonesian state. Washington, however, refused to intervene. The Dutch declared war against Atjeh on March 26, 1873.

The Atjehnese fought hard and long. With superb guerilla tactics they kept the Dutch at bay for twenty years. It took the Dutch another eight years to defeat the Atjehnese, and it was not until 1908 that they finally gave in.

Most dramatic of all the wars the Indonesians fought against the Dutch was in Bali—the island publicized as “paradise on earth,” presumably inhabited by indolent men and agreeable, firm-bosomed, dusky maidens.

In 1839 the Dutch signed treaties with the nine Balinese princes, who thereby agreed to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Netherlands. But the treaties proved to be of little value to the Dutch, and a series of expeditions from 1846 to 1906 were needed to subdue the whole territory. The Balinese finally gave up in two epic gestures of defiance: The rulers of two separate principalities, facing certain defeat, gathered their families and followers around them, arrayed in colorful traditional regalia, and armed with old-fashioned spears and short swords, and advancing toward the heavily armed Dutch positions, never halted until every man, woman and child was mowed down by Dutch gunfire.

Not until 1914 were the last occupation troops withdrawn from Bali. Yet to this day Dutch propaganda continues to proclaim that the Netherlands “reluctantly” took over the governing of Indonesia.

Thus, the little kingdom of the Netherlands, with 9 million people living in an area of less than 13 thousand square miles, became the ruler of Indonesia with 70 million people, inhabiting an area of 735 thousand square miles. With Surinam and Cura-

cao in the Caribbean region, the Dutch empire contained, before the second world war, more than eight times the population and over sixty times the area of the metropolitan country.

British conquest of India pursued the same general pattern as used by the Dutch.

In an attempt to break the Dutch monopoly of pepper, the British East India Company was formed in 1600. Finding the Dutch too solidly entrenched in Indonesia, the British company fastened its tentacles on India.

For a century and a half the company was forced to be content with establishing trading posts and securing commercial rights in various Indian coastal regions. The Moghul Empire was too strong to be attacked at that time, although the Company rashly made two attempts that ended in disastrous defeat.

Upon the death of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, the Moghul Empire was shattered by internal dissension. Like the Empire of Madjapahit in Indonesia, the Moghul Empire in India was built along feudal lines, the various Indian princes owing allegiance to the Emperor in Delhi. The seeds of disruption were inherent in such a set-up.

It was during the period of internal wars in the eighteenth century that the British East India Company began the conquest of India. Like the Dutch in Indonesia, the British in India backed one prince against another in return for concessions and tribute, frequently changed sides when they received better offers, and recklessly signed treaties no matter how contradictory their terms were.

Actual territorial conquest began in 1757 in Bengal on the eastern coast of India. It involved very little fighting, since the minister of the state, Mir Jafar, conspired with the British and held the bulk of the state's forces aloof from the war. Although the British in reality controlled Bengal from this time on, a pretense of independence was kept up for a while by putting puppet rulers on the throne.

While the British were engaged in conquest from the east, the French penetrated into India from the west, using the same tactics to gain territory. It was inevitable that the two would eventually meet. In 1761, the French were defeated and were eliminated as competitors by the Peace of Paris.

Then the conquest of India began in earnest. The stiffest opposition was offered by the Mahrathas. It took the British sixty-eight years of continuous fighting, from 1775 to 1843, to end the Mahratha resistance. But there was still one more bloody battle to be fought before British power could be stabilized in India—the revolt of 1857.

Popularly—and mistakenly—known as the Sepoy Mutiny, the war of 1857 was the last flaming outburst of the dying order of feudalism in India. It was an attempt by several of the remaining Indian rulers to unite to drive out the British. As in Indonesia, there was not yet a national consciousness in India. Even in Europe, national consciousness was of comparatively recent origin. The rulers never combined effectively, nor did they, as feudal lords, gain the wholehearted support of their people. Nevertheless, it was a violent and bitter struggle, marked by incredible brutality and savagery on both sides. By July, 1858, the revolt was crushed. Although many minor expeditions had to be undertaken for some time thereafter, the British were solidly in control of India from then on.

As was the case with its contemporary in Indonesia, the constant warfare proved too costly for the finances of the British East India Company, and its administration of India had wrought such havoc in the internal economy of the country that it threatened the successful exploitation of India by the new industrial magnates of Britain. As a result, in August, 1858, the British Parliament passed a bill entitled "An Act for the Better Government of India," by which the territories of the Company were transferred to the British Crown and the stockholders were compensated for the loss. The subjugation of India by Britain was complete.

The conquest of Burma by the British and of Indo-China by the French followed a similar pattern, with some variations.

A new twist to the pretext for colonial annexation was added by the French in their subjection of Indo-China. In 1857, France declared that she must avenge the murder of a French missionary in Annam. An expedition was sent against the Emperor of Annam, Tu-Duc, who was forced to cede to France three provinces of Cochinchina. Another French expedition a few years later conquered the remaining three provinces of Cochinchina.

Just north of Cochinchina lay the famed kingdom of Cambodia. Once again France claimed that Christians were being murdered, and Cambodia was made into a French protectorate. Thus by outright conquest or by establishing protectorates, France spread her control over Indo-China, and began to gnaw at the border of Siam (Thailand).

In the meantime, the British were advancing into Burma from their base in India. Beginning with their victory at Tennaserim in 1820, the British little by little bit off chunks of Burma. Since they had their hands full in India at the time, they did not hurry. But when they found, in 1885, that King Thibaw of Upper Burma was dickering with the French, the British sent a large force to overthrow Thibaw, and his territory was annexed to India on New Year's Day, 1886.

This left the British and the French facing each other at perilously close quarters. Only the kingdom of Siam lay between them. After an exchange of threats and counterthreats, and after the French had sliced off a portion of Siam, the two rivals came to an agreement. When France and Britain formed their *entente cordiale* in 1904, each allowed the other to cut off generous wedges of Siam on either side; what was left was designated a buffer state between their respective colonial possessions. The British were satisfied with this arrangement, since they had already secured valuable commercial, mining, and railway concessions in the rest of Siam. While peace be-

tween the two rivals was thus preserved, both continued to look hungrily at the buffer zone, and, after the second world war, each made determined efforts to extend its direct influence further into Siam.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century, Britain and Holland had acquired colonial empires of considerable proportions. Other European powers were far behind in colonial domains.

During the next fifty years there was a comparative lull in the conquest of foreign lands by European powers. The lust for colonies that the Industrial Revolution was to precipitate was delayed until the 1870's because of the unevenness of industrial development in the Western world.

Britain was the first country to face the problem of finding an expanding foreign market and source of raw materials. She already possessed large colonies, and by zealously guarding the secrets of her industrial inventions, she maintained a pre-eminent position for herself in the field of manufactured goods. What Britain wanted was not more colonies but free access for her goods into the industrially backward countries of the entire world. From Britain, the doctrine of free trade spread over Europe.

This does not mean there was no colonial expansion whatsoever during this fifty-year period. Britain, for example, continued her conquest and consolidation of her Indian empire. She annexed Burma and portions of Malaya, strengthened her position in China by acquiring Hongkong, and gained a foothold in Africa by taking over Cape Town and Natal. France planted the tricolor in Algeria and brought Tahiti within her fold. But all this merely whetted the appetite for the feast yet to come.

*Laissez-faire* and free trade theories were on their way out by 1870, by which time other western countries had caught up

with Britain in industrialization. Rivalry for colonies then began in earnest.

In looking about for virgin territories, all eyes simultaneously fell on the huge continent of Africa. Before 1870, less than 10 per cent of the 12 million square miles of the second largest continent in the world belonged to foreign powers. By 1905, there was scarcely an inch of territory left that the Africans could call their own.

Even before Africa was parceled out among the Western powers, Europeans were not unaware of the potential riches of that continent. Traders in gold, ivory, and slaves had plied the coastline of Africa for more than three centuries.

The most profitable of all was the slave trade. Arabs had been carrying on this trade for a long time, supplying the courts and harems of Asian potentates. But they were small fry compared to the Europeans, who sold about eight million slaves into America, while at least forty million Africans were killed in the course of capturing raids or died during the voyage to the slave markets of the New World.

In the sixteenth century the Portuguese entered the traffic in slaves, followed soon after by other Western countries. It was John Hawkins—later knighted by Queen Elizabeth—who pioneered the slave trade for the British. Sir John was a pious man, who enjoined his men to “Love one another” and “serve God daily” while he kidnapped African Negroes, to sell to Spanish colonists in America.<sup>21</sup> He chose as his crest a Negro in chains. One of his ships was named the *Jesus*.

So the Africans had a foretaste of what contact with Europeans meant; but it was a mere pinprick compared to the wholesale assault which followed later.

Late in the eighteenth century the vast continent of Africa was sparsely populated. It was divided into many kingdoms and tribal settlements. In some sections there were loose confederations of several tribes whose chiefs owed allegiance to a supreme king. In general, Africa resembled Europe in the early

Middle Ages, with its intermittent warfare among the tribes and kingdoms. The people had a high sense of honor, and were hospitable to strangers, unless the strangers were suspected as enemies or "blackbirders," that is, slave traders.

The European powers took advantage of the lack of sophistication of the Africans and used every wile imaginable in their penetration of the continent. Seemingly innocent explorers, scientists, and traders visited the African chiefs and kings, whom they persuaded to sign treaties of "friendship" with their respective governments. It inevitably transpired that the African rulers, by affixing their signs on these treaties, which they could not read, had either acknowledged the sovereignty of a European power, or had granted monopoly rights over their countries' mineral resources to a foreign trader. If a king or chief protested against this betrayal, he was threatened by the overwhelming military power of the government behind the trader. Any active resistance by the ruler was silenced by guns.

By and large, Africa was conquered by trading companies, backed by their respective governments. Usually these companies, whose directorate often included members of their own governments, secured and consolidated the colonies until their particular governments could take over. This ruse was used because too many powers were involved in expansion at the same time behind the screen of commercial ventures. It gave governments a chance to squeeze out of tight corners by denying responsibility for what their companies had done, if one trader overstepped the boundaries of another.

One of the big business magnates of the period was Cecil Rhodes. The son of an Anglican minister, Rhodes went to Cape Town in South Africa to recover his health in its bracing, dry climate.

Founded in 1652 by Dutch settlers as a naval station for the Netherlands ships sailing to Indonesia, Cape Town later grew into a farming community. Dutch farmers or Boers became prosperous by using African slaves to till the soil and tend the



cattle. During the Napoleonic wars the British took possession of the colony, and used it as a naval station for their India-bound ships. After slavery was abolished, some of the Dutch farmers moved northward and established the two Boer Republics of Transvaal and Orange Free State.

When Rhodes arrived in 1870, he found Cape Town filled with excitement over the discovery of diamonds in the neighborhood. Among the prospectors was one of his brothers. Rhodes joined him, and began a career that is an outstanding example of the hand-in-glove interworking of monopoly and imperialist expansion.

Rhodes did no prospecting himself. In partnership with C. D. Rudd, he built up a diamond trust by taking into partnership or buying up the smaller individual miners whose capital was exhausted. Later he met another budding monopolist by the name of Barney Barnato. Rhodes shrewdly began buying out minority interests in Barnato's company, until Barnato was forced to combine the two companies. Thus came into being the De Beers Consolidated Mines, which cornered the South African diamond output, and controlled ninety per cent of the world's supply.

With wealth came a far greater ambition. Rhodes began dreaming of total world conquest by Britain, of which the subjugation of Africa was to be the beginning. The first step in the plan of African conquest was to be a north-to-south belt of British territory, from Egypt to the Cape.

But the scramble for Africa had already begun in 1885. Above the Cape, the Germans were moving in from the west and the Portuguese from the east. If they met, Rhodes' dream would be circumscribed within the Cape.

Rhodes acted swiftly. Already a power in local politics, he started a vigorous agitation backed by his extensive financial interests. As a result, Britain sent an expeditionary force and established a protectorate over Bechuanaland.

Beyond Bechuanaland lay the kingdom of the Matabele,

ruled by King Lobengula. The Portuguese were already displaying maps indicating their ambitious scheme for an African colony, including Matabeleland.

Again Rhodes acted with speed and skill. King Lobengula was a renowned warrior, so the first essential was to forestall the intrigues of rival powers, and get him to sign a treaty of "friendship" with Britain. To this end Rhodes, at his own expense, sent the Rev. J. S. Moffat, son of the pioneer missionary Robert Moffat, to Lobengula. The missionary gentleman was already known to the Matabeles. Rev. Moffat had little difficulty, therefore, in persuading King Lobengula to put his mark to a document, agreeing not to enter into any negotiations with other powers without the consent of the British government. The Moffat document was a warning to other nations to keep their hands off Matabeleland.

Following this, Rhodes sent three of his agents, Rudd, Maguire, and Thompson, on another mission to Lobengula's kraal at Bulawayo. On October 30, 1888, Rhodes' henchmen, with the support of another missionary, persuaded the King to sign a second document. This was the famous Rudd Mineral Concession, by which the King was inveigled into granting Rhodes' agents "complete and exclusive charge over all metals and minerals situated and contained in my kingdom, principalities and dominions," plus the right "to exclude from my kingdoms, etc., all persons seeking land, metals, minerals, or mining rights therein." For these rights, Lobengula was to receive one thousand rifles with a hundred rounds of ammunition each, one hundred pounds sterling "payable on the first day of every lunar month," and a secondhand steamboat to enjoy on the Zambesi river.

Just before signing the paper, Lobengula became suspicious that all was not aboveboard. But Thompson quieted his distrust by pointing out that the King was getting one thousand Martini rifles, adding "Who gives a man arms, if he expects them later to be used against himself?"<sup>22</sup> The King, of course, had no knowledge of the more deadly machine guns that were

coming into use at the time. Nor did Thompson enlighten him.

With the document in his possession, Rhodes hurried to England to set up a chartered company to exploit Matabeleland. But the British government was wary, since Portugal's claims were known. Rhodes managed to overcome all government opposition by inviting the Duke of Abercorn to become president and the Duke of Fife to become vice-president of the new company, and by piously appealing to public sentiment by declaring that through his project "the conditions of the natives inhabiting the said territories will be materially improved and their civilization advanced."<sup>23</sup>

The government gave in. Queen Victoria signed the charter on October 29, 1889. It gave the South Africa Company for twenty-five years the right to *fully govern* the territory above Bechuanaland—with the northern boundary of the territory undefined, for Rhodes had other plans for the land beyond not included in the grant to the chartered company.

In the meantime, the story of the concession Lobengula had signed appeared in the Cape Town press, and the news spread to Matabeleland. The King was furious at having been tricked, for his understanding of the contract was very different. He was frightened, too, because he had no authority to give away property that, according to tribal law, belonged to the whole community. He appealed to Queen Victoria. "Some time ago," his message read, "a party of men came into my country, the principal one appearing to be a man called Rudd. They asked me for a place to dig gold and said they would give me certain things for the right to do so. I told them to bring what they would and I would show them what I would give. A document was written and presented to me for signature. I asked what it contained and was told that in it were my words and the words of those men. I put my hand to it. About three months afterwards I heard from other sources that I had given by that document the right to all the minerals of my country."<sup>24</sup>

To appease the thoroughly aroused tribe, the frantic Lobengula shifted the blame to his Minister and had him executed.

Buttressed by the charter, Rhodes went on with his scheme. He sent a group of hardy young men to occupy part of Lobengula's land. Each man was to receive fifteen gold claims and three thousand acres of land. With the group went five hundred Bechuanaland police and some African troops and laborers. The King ordered the party to leave his territory; but the British government hastily sent military reinforcements, under whose protection the "Rhodesian pioneers," as the group came to be known, settled down to prospecting and farming.

In desperation Lobengula tried to play his enemy's game of "divide and conquer." Keeping within the letter of his concession to Rudd, in which he had given away no rights to the *land*, the King offered land rights to a man named Lippert. He hoped that Lippert and Rudd would start fighting each other, leaving him alone.

Naturally, Rhodes was annoyed when he learned of the Lippert deal. Since Lippert was in a strong bargaining position, Rhodes acted as any monopolist would. He arranged to buy out Lippert's claim. At the same time he asked the ubiquitous Moffat, whom Lobengula still trusted, to persuade the King to confirm the land rights to Lippert.

When Lobengula learned of this fresh trickery, his comment was bitter and short: "All white men," he said, "are liars."<sup>25</sup>

Though he possessed all the documents, Rhodes' own troubles were not over. The daredevil pioneers, after settling down, "found that they could not pick up gold like gooseberries." They had much hard work ahead of them, and they lived in constant fear of raids by tribesmen. Meanwhile, in London, there was a scandal brewing, involving the chartered company, as it appeared that the Rudd concession, in effect, belonged to Rhodes and a few of his co-directors on the board of the company. The shares of the company declined on the stock markets, and Rhodes had to take drastic action.

The only way to redeem his own prestige and salvage the company, Rhodes reasoned, was to gain unfettered possession of the entire Matabeleland.

Taking steps to prevent Lobengula from communicating with the British authorities, Rhodes had his men pick a quarrel with some of the tribesmen, and then accused the Matabeles of having fired first. In October, 1893, the company's troops, armed with machine guns, attacked Lobengula's men. By November, Matabeleland had become Rhodesia, the King's cattle had been taken by the troops, and the people despoiled and decimated. By Christmas, Lobengula was dead.

Postscript: By 1895, the company's one-pound shares were selling for 91½ pounds. The company easily raised 750 thousand pounds on debenture to pay its creditors and meet the cost of the war. Magnanimously, the founder of the Rhodes scholarship paid for the education of Lobengula's sons.

Not all missionaries were like the Rev. J. S. Moffat. Colenso, the Bishop of Natal, befriended and gallantly fought for the rights of an African king. This was in the 1870s, when Lord Carnarvon, called by his colleagues "Twitters," was the Colonial Secretary in the British Cabinet.

"Twitters" was ambitious. He managed to bring the Boer Republic of Transvaal under the Union Jack. Then he sent a ruthless, equally expansion-mad special High Commissioner to South Africa. This was Sir Bartle Frere, just returned from the North-West Frontier of India, and much toughened by his experiences in fighting the rebellious tribesmen there.

Frere decided that the greatest obstacle in his path was the Zulu King, Cetshwayo. The Zulus had always been friendly to the British, but they often clashed with the Dutch, who were endeavoring to extend the boundaries of Transvaal into the Zulu homeland.

The Zulu King was a great warrior, and esteemed by his people. Twenty years before this, Bishop Colenso described him as "a fine handsome young fellow of about thirty years of age, tall and stout-limbed, with a good-humored face and strong, deep voice . . . Our men, one and all, commended him as a pleasing young prince." A British official who had attended his coronation, spoke of him as "a man of considerable ability and

much force of character. . . . He ranks in every respect far above any native chief I have ever had to do with.”<sup>28</sup>

Frere began by slandering the Zulus and their King as barbarous and inhuman. This was nothing unusual; from the moment that Africa was marked out as the special preserve of the European powers, a steady campaign of character assassination against all the people of Africa had been carried on to gain public support for aggression. But Frere added another touch. There had been much civil strife in the Zulu kingdom. Frere sent an ultimatum to Cetshwayo, demanding that the King disband his army and allow a British advisor to “restore law and order” in Zululand.

Cetshwayo, as was to be expected, ignored the ultimatum. So, in the name of restoring law and order and freeing the Zulus from a king whom Frere called a monster, British troops were sent to Zululand in 1879. Frere was, of course, scolded by the British Cabinet, but he was allowed to proceed with the establishment of law and order.

The Zulu warriors battled fiercely, annihilating at one time a whole detachment. But wooden spears eventually had to give way before guns. On July 4, 1879, at Ulundi, the Zulus were defeated. Casualties were ten thousand for the Zulus and twenty-five hundred for the British. Cetshwayo was taken a prisoner to Cape Town.

Zululand was divided into thirteen sections and declared a British protectorate by the Kilkenny Cat settlement—thus called, perhaps, because the ferocity and destructiveness of the battles matched that of the fabled Irish catfight that ended only when nothing was left but the tails. However, Zulu resistance continued sporadically. Frere ingeniously fomented conflicts among the sections, deciding it was the cheapest way to permanently weaken the Zulus.

Bishop Colenso staunchly supported Cetshwayo. By pulling wires he managed to get the Zulu King to England. Gladstone had succeeded Disraeli, and the new Prime Minister restored Cetshwayo to his throne after three years imprisonment.

This did not end the trouble of the Zulus. Despite solemn pledges honoring the territorial integrity of Zululand, Cetshwayo found more than half of his territory gone. The Transvaal Boers had sliced off a piece. Another slice had been given to Chief Zibebu, a bitter rival of Cetshwayo. A third of Zululand had been taken by the British as sanctuary for "those chiefs and people who were unwilling to be Cetshwayo's subjects," although the people in that particular section demanded to be under the King. With his dying breath, the seventy-year-old Colenso protested this division in vain.

Trouble started within two months of Cetshwayo's return. Zibebu's soldiers, secretly drilled and equipped with guns by the British, and supported by armed European adventurers, attacked Cetshwayo. "Now you know that the Zulus are set at loggerheads by the cunning white men, who want to eat up their land," wrote a Zulu eye-witness to Colenso. "My heart is full of grief, I cannot find words to express it, for this splendid old Zulu people."<sup>27</sup>

Ill as he was, Colenso protested strongly. Despite government opposition, the old Bishop managed to send, at his own expense, a European councilor named Grant to advise Cetshwayo. Then he died.

Cetshwayo's family was slaughtered by Zibebu during a surprise attack on the King's kraal. Cetshwayo, wounded, slandered by the British, died after six months' wandering as a fugitive. It was, perhaps, prophetic that the name Cetshwayo in Zulu means "He who is slandered."

While the British were painting the map of South Africa British red, the ruler of the little kingdom of Belgium was nursing ambitious schemes.

The shrewd, widely-traveled, ambitious King of Belgium, Leopold II, was the first monarch to sense the possibilities of African conquest. In fact, it was Leopold's grab of the Congo which more or less precipitated the scramble for African colonies.

For years King Leopold had been envious of Britain's and Holland's colonies. He was determined that Belgium should have her share of the world market. Impressed by Stanley's exploits in Africa, he set up an organization that later came to be known as the International Association of Congo, and employed Stanley in 1879 to return to Africa in utmost secrecy.

Traveling in a roundabout way to avoid exciting suspicion, Stanley reached the Congo. He covered a vast area, returned to Europe in 1882, and was sent back for further "exploration." By the time he returned to Europe again, in 1884, he had signed four hundred treaties with African chiefs, not in the name of any government, but of the aforementioned Association. The African chiefs understood nothing of what they were signing away; they were merely being hospitable to the European stranger. In course of time, these chiefs found the Association had declared a protectorate over them.

But trouble lay ahead for Leopold. Switching sides, Stanley rushed to London and asked the British to take over his find. Lord Granville, the British Foreign Minister was too shrewd to provoke hostilities against Britain by making a frontal attack on the Belgian king. He arranged for the British satellite Portugal to claim the rights to the mouth of the Congo river, the only outlet to the sea for the Congo Basin. Britain then signed a treaty with Portugal, recognizing Portuguese sovereignty over the mouth of the Congo. Leopold could keep his Congo, but he was effectively bottled up inland, dependent upon Britain for a trade outlet to the sea.

Leopold countered this move by adroitly manipulating the affair into an international issue. He brought France into the controversy by signing a treaty with her, whereby France recognized the Association's claim to the Congo, in return for an option to buy the Congo should the Association at any time wish to sell it. Germany, in anticipation of entering the race for colonies, decided to support France so as to secure French goodwill for future German claims against possible British opposition. Confronted by France and Germany standing beside



Leopold, Britain gave in, and Portugal's claim was dropped.

With international recognition assured, Leopold could do away with camouflage. He dissolved the Association, and, in July, 1885, proclaimed himself ruler of the Congo Free State. On November 15, 1908, he transferred the Congo to the Belgian government upon payment of ninety-five million francs and a guaranteed annuity to the royal family. Thus Belgium acquired an empire in the Congo covering 900,000 square miles.

France was by no means confining her activities with regard to Africa to diplomatic maneuverings; she, too, had her finger in the pie, especially in western Africa. Even as Stanley was "exploring" the south bank of the Congo river for Leopold, Savorgnan de Brazza was staking out claims for France—which later became the French Congo—on the north bank of the river.

Since there were no railroads in Africa, waterways were of supreme importance for commercial transportation as well as avenues of conquest, and river basins were highly prized as bases of operation. Control of the Niger—one of the greatest rivers of Africa—was inevitably a source of conflict between France and Britain.

The two countries were as usual represented by trading companies. The French Company of Equatorial Africa made numerous treaties with the African chiefs in the Niger Valley, and established many trading posts. The British Royal Niger Company hotly contested the French claims. To put the French out of business, the British company began to cut prices on their merchandise 25 per cent in the neighborhood of the French trading posts. The contest was uneven to begin with, since the Royal Niger Company had capital resources of one million pounds sterling against the French Equatorial Company's one and a half million francs; so that, in the game of price cutting, the British had more staying power, and were soon able to force the French to sell out to them.

The British hardly had time to celebrate this victory when

word leaked out that a German merchant named Flegel was quietly planning to acquire the Fula kingdom north of the British possessions. A British agent was rushed to the north. By the time the unsuspecting Flegel was making his leisurely way to the Fula, the British agent was ready to return home with treaties of "friendship" with the Fula kingdom in his pocket.

A furious race began for more territorial acquisitions. The French were able to appropriate the upper and middle reaches of the Niger, while the Germans inched toward the British preserves from the east. The British hastily pushed up the river and British agents exchanged beads and cloth and gin for treaties with the African rulers. Eventually, the British government paid 865 thousand pounds to the Royal Niger Company, and established protectorates over northern and southern Nigeria in 1900.

Though she failed in many other parts of Africa, a large empire was carved out by France in the north of the continent.

Algeria came into the possession of the French long before modern imperialism was at its most aggressive stage. By 1830, the reign of Charles X of France had become very shaky, and the Bourbon monarch decided a spectacular military victory was needed to restore the prestige of the throne. Searching for a pretext to launch an expedition, someone recalled that three years previously the ruler of Algeria had insulted a French envoy by slapping his face with a fan. This might appear too trifling an incident to provoke war, but the history of colonial conquest is full of instances of aggression having even less justification. As the expedition gathered momentum, an added reason was found in the frequent raids made on European shipping by Algerian corsairs, then known as the Barbary pirates. In May, 1830, the French fleet sailed to Algeria and planted the tricolor of France. Thus the French acquired a territory larger than France, although it took nearly forty years to consolidate their victory.

During the crucial period of imperialist expansion, therefore, France had a foothold in North Africa, whence she could ex-

pand. Algeria itself had turned out to be immensely profitable as an agricultural colony. It was only natural for Frenchmen to ogle the adjacent province of Tunis.

At a time when large numbers of European traders and treaty-makers were swarming about Africa, it was inevitable that some of them would turn up in Tunis. In the capricious and expansive person of the Bey of Tunis they found a gullible victim willing to borrow vast sums to satisfy his whims. There came a time when he owed 28 million francs at an average interest rate of 13 per cent, while his treasury was practically empty. To repay his debts he gladly accepted a proposal for floating a consolidated loan of 35 million francs on the Paris Bourse. The Bey received less than 6 million cash out of the transaction, but was obliged to carry the interest charges on both the 35 million and the previous 28 million franc loans. This situation developed a vicious circle: to meet his obligations the Bey increased the taxes on the people, who naturally rebelled; to crush the rebellion the Bey had to borrow more money; to carry the increased burden of debt he had to increase the taxes again, which in turn provoked the people into renewed violence.

Once again the debt was consolidated, this time at 125 million francs. Italy in the meantime had remembered that Tunis was once the seat of the Carthaginian empire. Britain, as usual, nosed into the plot. As a result, a financial commission composed of French, British and Italian representatives was set up in 1869 to straighten out the mess in Tunis. A three-cornered competition for various investment concessions developed.

The European powers were again on the verge of open hostilities in Africa, and once again they resolved the conflict by bargaining. Britain withdrew her opposition to France's exploitation of Tunis in return for a free hand in Cyprus and the Near East. Germany, angling to involve France in a war with Italy, magnanimously notified France that she would not object to her Tunisian venture. Thus emboldened, France warned Italy to keep hands off Tunis.

Shortly thereafter, under the pretext of punishing Tunisian tribes accused of raids across the border of Algeria, a large French expeditionary force overran Tunis, and France declared a protectorate over it. Another 125 million franc loan was saddled on the country. To protect her vast economic interests, France suppressed the international financial commission of 1869, and barred all foreign trade except French by raising high tariff walls. But to keep Britain pacified, France allowed her to ship cotton textiles to Tunis at no more than 5 per cent *ad valorem* tax. All other branches of trade in Tunis, however, remained a French monopoly.

During the last third of the nineteenth century Africa was the prize for which empire-builders fought. For about thirty years they stalked the entire continent like a pack of hungry wolves. Entering from all sides, they were often on the verge of colliding, but due to the vastness of the land they were able to branch off at a tangent and stake their claims elsewhere. The wolves masqueraded in sheep's clothing, scurrying to and fro in the guise of explorers, traders, and concession hunters, with bags of beads, cloth, and gin, and despatch cases crammed with blank treaties to be palmed off on unsuspecting African rulers. Not by accident but by design, territories were acquired in the name of trading companies, to be annexed by governments once the traders had consolidated their possessions.

In the process they used all the imaginable pretexts for conquest: retaliation for the killing of missionaries, quelling of tribal uprisings, protection from border raids, recouping of unpaid loans, fulfillment of treaty terms of which the African rulers were never aware, "establishment of law and order," and thrusting "protection" upon unwilling kings and chiefs. Incidentally, while condemning the Africans for killing Christian missionaries, it is well to remember that "blackbirders" often used to appear in the garb of missionaries, and that the Christian missionaries were often but the advance guard of the European conquering powers. Apart from these, the previously

successful methods applied in the Far East were also applied in Africa. In the contest over the Borgu empire, for example, Britain signed a treaty with the ruling king, while France supported a rival claimant to the throne as the "legitimate" ruler. Since the territory was large, Britain and France eventually managed to divide the loot amicably. Conquest was not always easy, however; consolidation of power sometimes required heavy and prolonged fighting against Africans determined to stay free, as in Britain's war against the Ashanti people, which lasted for a quarter of a century; and the success of the Europeans was due to their having the newly-invented Maxim gun, whereas the Africans had only weapons such as spears and clubs.

The rape of Africa involved much international intrigue and considerable sanctimonious bilge: Britain conspired with Italy against France in order to gain the Sudan and protect Cecil Rhodes' dream of an unbroken Cape-to-Cairo British empire; Germany played France against Italy and Britain; Britain allowed Germany to take over Togoland and the Cameroons; many secret treaties were signed with a cynical eye on the inevitability of future open conflict, as was exposed after the first world war.

To cap the game of make-believe, European powers proclaimed their actions to be humanitarian, fair, and honorable. For example, at the International Conference held in Berlin to settle the dispute over the Congo, the signatories promised "to protect the natives in their moral and material well-being, to cooperate in the suppression of slavery and the slave trade, to further the education and civilization of the natives; to protect missionaries, scientists and explorers . . ." <sup>28</sup>—promises disturbingly echoed in the terms of the mandates after the first world war, and the phraseology used in the Trusteeship section of the United Nations Charter after the second world war.

As an earnest of good feeling prevailing among the imperialist nations, Gladstone piously welcomed Germany's expansion into Africa by saying: "If Germany is to become a colonizing

power, all I can say is God speed her. She becomes our ally and partner in the execution of the great purposes of Providence for the advantage of mankind.”<sup>29</sup> That it was not all brotherly love was indicated by Lord Granville’s remarks to Herbert Bismarck in June, 1884, that “it cannot be otherwise than all right with us, if Germany pursues a colonial policy and opens barbarous lands to civilization and trade; we would certainly be glad of it. It is quite different with France, for wherever they colonize the French introduce high tariffs, up to fifty per cent, and thereby injure us severely.”<sup>30</sup>

Lord Granville really gave the show away when he accused the French of raising tariff walls in their colonies against competitors. For colonies were acquired to insure monopoly control of trade and raw materials. For instance, in the huge island of Madagascar, off the east coast of Africa, France imposed a “protectorate” on the highly gifted Hova Queen. This was accomplished by picking a quarrel with the Queen and fighting two bloody wars. Under the protectorate, the French secured a monopoly of trade with Madagascar.

This was not at all to the liking of Britain and even the United States. They vehemently protested that under existing treaty rights and by international law, their traders were entitled to equal privileges. The shrewd historian and diplomat Hanotaux rescued France from this crisis. He discovered that if Madagascar were an outright French possession, such treaty rights would be ineffective. No sooner was this way out found than the French, without the slightest compunction, exiled the Hova Queen, to whom they had promised “protection,” and annexed the island for France. Thereafter, French goods entered Madagascar duty free, while prohibitive tariffs were set up against all other foreign goods.

It was the British conquest of Egypt and the Sudan, however, that telescoped within a brief period the entire relationship between monopoly capital and colonial acquisition.

In the middle of the nineteenth century Egypt was ruled as a

virtually independent country by the Khedive, who owed nominal allegiance to the Sultan of Turkey. The Khedive also claimed sovereignty over the Sudan.

French influence was dominant in Egypt at the time. The Suez Canal was a French project financed largely by French capital, but the Khedive held nearly half the shares in the Canal Company. In the 1860's, Egypt assumed greater importance to Britain. Cotton shipments from the United States suffered from the Civil War, and Britain became dependent on Egyptian cotton, raised largely in British-owned plantations. The British also realized how vital the Suez Canal was to them since it was on the main route to India, and they set out to gain control over Egypt by cultivating the friendship of Khedive Ismail.

When Ismail decided to modernize Egypt by building roads and railroads, bridges and canals and harbors, he turned to Britain for loans. It is highly illuminating to observe what fabulous profits British industrialists and financiers made on the Egyptian deal.

In about ten years, beginning in 1864, loans to the tune of £52,500,000 were raised in London. Of this sum, Egypt received £35,400,000, the balance being pocketed by the financiers as commissions and expenses. The industrialists also made huge profits, since most of the money raised was spent in Britain to buy equipment for the projects in Egypt. When the Khedive, for example, paid £2,500,000 to British contractors for the harbor works at Alexandria, the contractors made a profit of £1,100,000. In twelve years Egypt's foreign debt pyramided to £80,000,000, and the Khedive was called upon to pay £6,000,000 interest on this sum out of a total state revenue of £10,000,000.

The finances of the country could not stand this strain for long. The Khedive was obliged to sell his bonds for cash. In 1873 he sold 7 per cent bonds whose face value was £32,000,000 for only £20,000,000. By 1875 short term treasury bonds bearing 20 per cent interest were available at one-fourth their face value.

In desperation Ismail offered to sell to the French interests his 176,602 shares in the Suez Canal Company. While the transaction was pending, Lord Derby, Foreign Minister in Disraeli's Cabinet, learned about Ismail's offer through a British journalist, and immediately brought it to the notice of the Prime Minister. Disraeli, who looked upon the Suez Canal as "a highway to our Indian Empire," hastily borrowed money from the Rothschilds and bought the Khedive's shares for £3,680,000 in 1875. The Rothschilds, incidentally, made a hundred thousand pounds on the deal.

The sale of the Suez Canal shares was hardly enough to plug the hole in the Egyptian budget. Unbearable taxes were imposed on the long-suffering peasants to line the pockets of the foreign bondholders. Added to this there was a cattle plague and severe famine in 1878. Fed by the discontent of the people, an openly anti-foreign Nationalist Party began to gain ground and forced some governmental reforms from the Khedive. This was not at all to the liking of the British and the French, who deposed Ismail in the name of the Sultan of Turkey. The more amenable Tewfik Pasha was made the ruler of Egypt. Competition over the division of Africa by the European powers had stiffened, so the Anglo-French authorities warned Tewfik that "the establishment in Egypt of political influence on the part of any other Power, in competition with that of England and France, would not be tolerated."<sup>31</sup>

Meantime, the Nationalist movement, led by Col. Ahmed Arabi and other army officers, continued to grow in strength. They came into power in 1881, determined to oust foreign exploiters from their soil.

Faced with the possibility of losing their investments, Britain and France attempted to intimidate the Nationalists by waving the Big Stick. In May, 1882, they sent an Anglo-French fleet to Alexandria for a naval demonstration, simultaneously demanding that Col. Arabi be expelled from the Cabinet. The Egyptians turned down this ultimatum.

Britain was determined to crush the rising Nationalist move



ment before it became uncontrollable. But the sharpening conflict between the imperialist powers made it impossible for her to launch an attack without a plausible excuse. Consequently, when in June, 1882, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and Austria agreed not to seek any "territorial advantage, nor any concession of any exclusive privilege," the British slipped in the phrase, "except in case of special emergency."

The "special emergency" soon materialized. On the pretext that Col. Arabi was being unfriendly toward the British by fortifying Alexandria, Britain attacked Egypt. Preceding this, Britain was obliged to consult some other powers, in order to be within the letter of her agreement not to take unilateral action against Egypt. She extended a half-hearted invitation to Turkey and Italy, anticipating refusal since Turkey was already the "Sick Man of Europe" and Italy was otherwise occupied. "We have shown our readiness to admit others," Foreign Minister Lord Granville wrote with relief, when Turkey and Italy declined the invitation, "and we have not the inconveniences of a partner. . . . If Arabi caves in, as appears probable, we shall be on velvet."<sup>32</sup>

On July 11, 1882, the British fleet opened fire on the defenses of Alexandria. British troops landed and defeated Arabi's forces at Tel-el-Kebir. By September the conquest of Egypt was complete.

To forestall protests from other European powers, British politicians belched out a heavy smokescreen of excuses and assurances. Gladstone quickly announced that in Egypt "we seek the maintenance of all established rights, whether they be those of the Sultan, those of the Khedive, those of the people of England, or those of the foreign bondholders."<sup>33</sup> Lord Granville blandly assured everyone that Britain sought only "the maintenance of the sovereign rights of the Sultan, of the position of the Khedive, and of the liberties of the Egyptian people, . . . the prudent development of their institutions, and the fulfillment of all international engagements."<sup>34</sup> Sir Charles Dilke, Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, chimed in with platitudes

about "treaty right" and "necessity" and "duty" and the benefit that would accrue to the British working man through trade with a stabilized Egypt.

Later, Gladstone solemnly declared that "of all the things in the world," permanent occupation of Egypt "is the thing we are not going to do."<sup>35</sup> On January 3, 1883, Britain officially informed her rivals that British troops would be withdrawn "as soon as the state of the country, and the organization of the proper means for the maintenance of the Khedive's authority, will admit of it."<sup>36</sup> Again, on August 9, 1883, Gladstone emphasized the worth of British pledges by stressing that they were "specific and solemn pledges given to the world in the most solemn manner and under the most critical circumstances—pledges which have earned for us the confidence of Europe at large during the course of difficult and delicate operations, and which, if one pledge can be more sacred than another, special sacredness in this case binds us to fulfill."<sup>37</sup> How the pledge has been fulfilled is indicated by the fact that the British army remains glued to Egypt to this day.

Through the thick fog of sanctimony, one could scarcely see the bondholders clipping their coupons. The coupon clippers were happy, for Major Evelyn Baring, of Baring Brothers the bankers, was appointed Consul-General to Egypt and they were confident their interests were paramount in his mind. Major Baring remained the real ruler of Egypt for the next twenty-five years. He summed up his ruling policy by saying: "The interests of the bondholders and those of the Egyptian people were identical."<sup>38</sup> So successful was Baring in his policy that a grateful British government later raised him to the peerage. He became even more distinguished for his useful qualities as Lord Cromer.

The Sudan as well as Egypt had a place in the British scheme of a Cape-to-Cairo belt. Since to the Egyptians, too, the Sudan was a life-and-death matter, the background for the Sudanese story will be related briefly here.

In the campaign for the conquest of the Sudan, Britain

collided with France and nearly came to war. For the French dream of a west-to-east African empire also crossed the Sudan and Abyssinia.

A religious nationalist movement led by Mohammed Ahmed, who claimed to be the divinely inspired "Mahdi" or guide, flourished in the Sudan in 1881. Since Egypt had in the past claimed sovereignty over the Sudan, an Egyptian expeditionary force was sent under Col. Hicks against the Mahdi in 1883. The Egyptian army was utterly annihilated by the Mahdi's forces. Only Khartoum remained in the hands of the Egyptians. Spurring on the troops with powerful propaganda, Gladstone sent General Gordon to evacuate the garrison at Khartoum.

In vain Gordon tried to conciliate the Mahdi. As the Sudanese closed in on Khartoum, he sent appeals to Britain for reinforcements; but help arrived too late—two days after Khartoum had fallen and Gordon had been killed. Since it was not strong enough to reconquer the Sudan, the relief force returned to Britain.

For the next twelve years the Mahdi and his successor, Abdullah, ruled the Sudan. Having burnt their fingers in the first attempt, the British hesitated to launch another attack against the powerful Sudanese forces until a more favorable moment had arrived and the conquest of Egypt was consolidated. In the meantime, Britain had to act fast to prevent France from slicing west through Abyssinia from French Somaliland. The British government was aware of the French dream of a North African empire, and was shrewd enough to guess that Gladstone's facile promises to evacuate Egypt in a short time was taken at less than face value across the English channel.

In 1891 the British and Italians consulted a map of Africa and came to an amicable understanding about a partial division of North Africa. The Italians were awarded a big chunk of eastern Abyssinia, leaving the British enough territory to link Egypt with Uganda for their Cape-to-Cairo belt. Soon after this, Uganda was added to the British Empire. After acquiring

Uganda, Britain secured from Leopold II of Belgium a corridor linking Uganda with the British possessions in South Africa, in return for a lease on part of the Sudan.

Finding themselves checkmated by the British, the French protested loudly. The other powers were none too pleased either about British expansion. Their joint pressure obliged the British and King Leopold to revise their agreements, leaving France a clear road from east to west Africa, and freedom of movement for Germany westward from German East Africa.

Next, the French attempted to win the friendship of Menelik, Emperor of Abyssinia.

Menelik was smarting under the humiliation of a betrayal by his erstwhile friends, the Italians. In 1889, with the British looking on benignly, the Italians had persuaded Menelik to sign a treaty of "friendship." According to the Amharic text of the treaty, article 17 stated that "His Majesty the King of Kings of Abyssinia *shall be at liberty* to avail himself of the government of His Majesty the King of Italy for the treatment of all questions concerning other Powers and Governments."<sup>39</sup> (Italics added.) But the Italian version of the treaty conveniently used the word "consents to" in place of the phrase "shall be at liberty to." On the strength of this neat little trick of misinterpreting a phrase in translation, the Italian diplomats declared Abyssinia a protectorate.

When Menelik learned of this duplicity, he denounced the treaty, and on the rebound was ready to fall into French hands. He accepted the aid of France to train and equip his army, and granted a concession to a French company to build a railway from the French port of Jibuti, through Abyssinia, to the Nile.

Failing to gain what they wanted by trickery, the Italians attacked Abyssinia, but suffered a catastrophic defeat at the battle of Adowa in March, 1896.

The plot now thickens. Since Britain was supposed to be a friend of Italy, the British took advantage of the Italo-Abyssinian war to send an army from Egypt, under Kitchener, ostensibly to help the Italians. Kitchener's job, however, was

to subdue the Sudanese, for which the British now felt strong enough.

Meanwhile, having established themselves in the good graces of Menelik, the French also decided that the time was ripe to embark on their drive for the linking of their east and west African colonies. In February, 1896, they hastily sent an expedition under Captain Marchand straight through the heart of Africa to stake out a French claim on the Nile. Marchand was promised assistance by French forces ordered to proceed from Abyssinia and join him at his destination.

After a long journey through unexplored regions, Marchand reached the village of Fashoda on the Nile in the Sudan and claimed the territory in the name of France. He eagerly waited for the reinforcements coming from Abyssinia. But it was Kitchener's army that arrived to meet him; the fever-ridden swamps and the unbridgeable rivers had turned back the French forces.

Even with no army to back him, Marchand stood his ground. Kitchener realized that, though his army was strong enough to haul down the French flag at Fashoda, a large-scale European war might grow out of this skirmish in a little village in Africa. With much show of courtesy, Marchand and Kitchener parted, dumping the problem in the laps of their home governments.

The fat was in the fire, and accusations leaped back and forth across the English Channel. French Foreign Minister Delcassé asserted that France had as much right to expand as Britain. Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister of Britain, backed by a jingo press and public, supported Kitchener.

As has so often happened, it was left to a Liberal leader to add the sanctimonious touch to this imperialist aggression. It was Lord Roseberry who declared: "The nation will make any sacrifice and go to any length to sustain" the British government in its efforts to conquer the Sudan because Britain must protect "the rights of Egypt."<sup>40</sup> It will be recalled that in the days when Egypt was nominally attached to the Ottoman Empire, the Egyptian Khedive had theoretical sovereignty over

the Sudan. After putting Egypt in its pocket, the British government now claimed the right to the Sudan in the name of its forcibly acquired colony.

Hypocrisy did not stop at mere declamation and propaganda. In the case of the Sudan it was carried to unbelievable lengths. After shadow boxing for a while, France and Britain settled their quarrel by drawing a line of demarcation through central Africa. The British gobbled up the part of Sudan needed to complete the Cape-to-Cairo line, allowing France to expand her possessions in the rest of the Sudan. Having conquered the Sudan in the name of Egypt, Britain then proceeded to saddle Egypt with the cost of the war. As it took some time to consolidate British power in the Sudan, the Sudanese budget showed a deficit for several years. Egypt had to make up this deficit. During the period 1901-09 this amounted to £2,750,000. The Egyptian government was also called upon to supply large sums for railway construction and irrigation projects on the upper reaches of the Nile in the Sudan. What British industrialists and financiers gained by this will be described in the next chapter.

Britain carried this hypocrisy to even greater heights. In return for the use of Egypt's very tenuous rights over the Sudan, she proclaimed that the Sudan was a "condominium," to be jointly governed by the British and the Egyptians. Theoretically, Egypt had the right to appoint the Governor-General of the Sudan with, of course, British approval. But, as Albert Maisel has pointed out, "since the scheme was instituted, the Governor-General, strangely enough, has always turned out to be an Englishman," and "The provincial governors appointed by that governor general also have a strange habit of being Englishmen."<sup>41</sup>

Besides monopolizing the Sudanese administration, the British maintained control over the irrigation works in the Sudan. As Egyptian agriculture is entirely dependent upon the waters of the Nile, Britain thus held the power of life and death over the Egyptians even without military control of Egypt.

Although Africa was the jackpot for which imperialist powers contended in the late nineteenth century, it was by no means the only territory coveted by expanding western industrial and financial interests. The hunt for new markets and sources of raw material to be monopolized was world-wide, and no continent was safe from the predatory Western powers.

In the Far East, beginning with the period of mercantilism, Britain, Holland, and France extended their sway over a vast area rich in natural resources. One might wonder how they happened to overlook another large and populous country—China.

As a matter of fact, neither in the mercantilist era nor in the age of deliberate imperialism did the Western powers completely ignore China. Through the tales of Marco Polo, who visited the court of the Mongol Emperor, Kublai Khan, Europeans in the fifteenth century were familiar with the splendor of Chinese culture. For centuries Arab and Persian merchants had been trading in Chinese manufactures, and some of it had trickled into Europe by way of Venice. During the days of the various East India companies, western merchants eagerly sought the silk, porcelain, jade, lacquer, and tea of China. The Portuguese had appeared in Canton early in the sixteenth century and received permission from the local governor to trade in Chinese goods. Later other Europeans sailed into Chinese waters, lured by the profitable trade.

This initial contact with the West was far from pleasant for the Chinese; they had no love for the Europeans. The Portuguese, Spanish, British, French, and Dutch were as often pirates as they were traders. They plundered Chinese junks plying their trade with the Philippines and other neighboring countries. Their mercenaries raided Chinese coastal cities, massacred the people, and carried off incredible quantities of loot. The Chinese tried to bar the Europeans from their shores.

But the pull of the China trade was impossible to resist. In 1792, George III of England sent an emissary to the court of the poet-emperor, Ch'ien Lung, asking to establish trade re-

lations between China and Britain. "The Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance," Ch'ien Lung replied haughtily. "There is therefore no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians." With graciousness befitting the emperor of the Middle Kingdom, Ch'ien Lung forgave King George for his presumption: "I do not forget the lonely remoteness of your island cut off from the world by intervening wastes of sea," the Chinese Emperor wrote, "nor do I overlook your excusable ignorance of our Celestial Empire."<sup>42</sup>

Ch'ien Lung could not foresee that in less than fifty years the European "barbarians" would be dictating their own terms to China. In fact, soon after his rebuke to George of England, he was obliged to open China's door a little to the insistent western merchants, for the Chinese merchants of the south by this time had perceived the profits to be made in trading with the West. Under pressure from them, the Emperor finally yielded and allowed foreign trade to enter the port of Canton.

Here in Chinese waters Americans became involved in the scramble for trade long before the United States embarked on its own brand of imperialism. The China trade was a lucrative item in American economy even before the Revolution. For a long time the famous China Clippers set the pace for other ships in the Pacific, and for some time the trade with China helped considerably to ease the strain on the finances of the United States.

Trade through the one port of Canton whetted the appetite of the European merchants, who started looking for a way to open China's doors wider. An "incident" in 1839 furnished the first opportunity to breach the wall of Chinese resistance.

By this time the most profitable trade was in opium, sold in China in great quantities by the British East India Company. The effect of opium smoking on the Chinese disturbed Lin Tse Hsi, Commissioner of the Chinese government in Canton. He decided to wipe out the traffic in the drug. When his demand for the surrender of the stocks of opium was refused by the British, Lin forcibly confiscated and destroyed the opium, and put the



British under arrest. In November, 1839, the British Navy opened fire on the Chinese fleet. The Opium War ended in China's defeat.

In 1842, exactly half a century after Ch'ien Lung declined George III's offer of establishing trade relations, the British dictated their peace terms in the Treaty of Nanking.

Besides paying an indemnity, China was forced to cede the island of Hongkong to Britain, and to open the ports of Canton, Shanghai, Amoy, Foochow, and Ningpo to foreign merchants for trade and residence. In the "treaty ports" foreign residents were exempted from Chinese law, and could be tried only by their own courts. A maximum duty of five per cent was fixed on imports, depriving China of the right to regulate her own tariffs. Britain was the first to secure these rights by the Nanking Treaty; within the next few years other European powers and the United States followed suit.

The repercussions of the Opium War were felt throughout China—especially in the south, where the peasants suffered heavily from feudalistic landlordism, and where ancient handicraft industries collapsed before the onslaught of machine-made goods from Europe. A wave of social unrest stirred the people to violent action against the Manchu Dynasty. This was the historic T'ai ping Rebellion of 1848, which the Chinese Emperor eventually suppressed after more than a dozen years of bloody warfare.

Beginning in the south, the T'ai ping Rebellion swept through the greater part of China. Influenced somewhat by Christian missionary teachings, the T'aipings professed to establish the "Kingdom of Peace." Primarily struggling against the feudal structure of Chinese society, they destroyed landlords' title deeds and notes held by money-lenders against the peasants, and announced a plan of distributing land to the landless farmers.

While the Emperor of China had his hands full with the T'ai ping Rebellion, the British slyly took advantage of another "incident" to extract greater concessions from China.

The Chinese governor of Canton arrested the crew of a Chinese ship on the charge of piracy. Immediately the British protested, because the Chinese ship flew the British flag through a permit from the government of Hongkong. In vain the Chinese governor pointed out that the permit had already expired. Britain declared war on China in 1857. By a strange coincidence, it was reported at the same time that a French missionary had been killed by the Chinese; so the French eagerly joined the British in picking a fight with China.

Once again China was defeated. By the Treaty of Tientsin, the Chinese government agreed to open more treaty ports, allow trade on the Yangtse river, accept a British minister at Peking, and further reduce the tax on imports. Russia and the United States, though they had remained aloof from the war, came into the negotiations in time to share the spoils of victory.

It was arranged that the representatives of the four foreign powers would meet the Chinese government in the capital city of Peking within a year for the ratification of the Treaty of Tientsin. As the Peiho river route to Peking had been fortified against any attack by the still rebellious T'aipings, the Chinese government requested the American, British, and French representatives to avoid trouble by taking the land route to Peking, as the Russian envoy was doing. The American representative agreed, but the touchy British and the French insisted on sailing up the river Peiho, and were fired upon by the Chinese guarding the river.

Once again an Anglo-French war was declared against China; an army sacked Peking, looted the historic summer palace and burned it to the ground. Anglo-French soldiers destroyed precious manuscripts and rare art treasures, making bonfires of them that burned for days.

After this display of power, the Chinese Emperor not only ratified the Treaty of Tientsin but paid an indemnity and ceded to the British an area on the mainland near Hongkong. To humble the Chinese still further, a curious clause was inserted in the Treaty of Tientsin: "The Christian religion, as pro-

fessed by Protestants or Roman Catholics, inculcates the practice of virtue and teaches man to do as he would be done by. Persons teaching or professing it, therefore, shall alike be entitled to the protection of the Chinese authorities. . . ." <sup>43</sup>

Their objectives gained, the British and French went to the aid of the Chinese Emperor against the T'aipings. A large force under the British adventurer Charles "Chinese" Gordon finally crushed the T'aiping rebellion.

One might wonder why, since China was too weak to withstand attack by a strong army equipped with up-to-date weapons, she was not conquered outright by one of the Western powers. The reason was twofold: first, the awe-inspiring size and prestige of China made the European powers hesitant about tackling the job of complete conquest and consolidation of their rule; secondly, in the first half of the nineteenth century, Britain was free from serious competition in the world market, she had persuasively spread the doctrine of free trade, and the other Western countries, less advanced industrially than Britain, were content to press for the "open door" to trade and a fixed, low tariff. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, after Japan had exposed the internal weaknesses of China and rivalry for monopolized markets and raw material sources grew keen, there were already too many powers on the scene for any one of them to secure exclusive control of China. This did not mean that China was let alone to go her way. Some of the peripheral sections were torn off the Chinese empire; for the rest, the Western powers were obliged to divide China proper into their respective "spheres of influence." China remained independent in name only, while her status became that of a multisected colony.

Thus, toward the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, France lopped off Indo-China, Britain took Burma, and Japan seized Korea. Over all these Asian countries the Chinese Emperor had claimed sovereignty.

After the Sino-Japanese war of 1894, Russia, Germany and France posed as the friends of China. Although they allowed

Japan to retain Formosa and the smaller Pescadores Islands, and control over Korea, they forced her to disgorge Liaotung Peninsula at the tip of Manchuria. This was prompted not by altruism but because Manchuria was too dangerously close to Russia. In return for this friendly act, China had to give France an option on all mines in the three provinces next to Indo-China, reduce tariffs by thirty to forty per cent on goods coming over the Indo-Chinese border, and allow the French to extend their railways from Indo-China into China. Russia secured the right to set up a bank to facilitate the payment of the \$170,000,000 indemnity China had promised Japan, and to build tax-exempt railways through northern China for which the Chinese were to supply the right of way through public lands free. Germany, however, acted in a more subtle manner, thereby exhibiting a new finesse in imperialist expansion: The Kaiser obtained a ninety-nine year "lease" on about 200 square miles of land on the Kiachow Bay, and the right to build two railways, exploit the mines, and invest German capital in public works projects in the province of Shantung.

The other powers immediately rushed for "leases." Right on Germany's heels, France obtained a ninety-nine year lease of about 190 square miles on Kwangchow Bay, near the border of French Indo-China. In less than three weeks after the German agreement, Russia secured a lease of 538 square miles on the Liaotung Peninsula. Britain soon followed with a lease of Weihai-wei and 400 square miles near Hongkong.

Merrily the Great Powers continued carving China into "spheres of influence" where each could monopolize the trade and resources of its particular locality through fortified harbors, railways, and treaties forbidding encroachment by others. Italy's feeble bid for a share was brusquely turned down. It looked as though the "open door" were being shut to others, when a giant newcomer to the arena of imperialist expansion insisted that the door to China be kept open. Just as the nineteenth century was coming to a close, the United States Secre-

tary of State John Hay notified the Great Powers that America was determined to get her share from the Chinese bonanza.

The above rapid survey of events in China during the last decade of the nineteenth century is not meant to imply that the partitioning of China into "spheres of influence" proceeded smoothly and amicably. In this "battle of concessions" there were frequent conflicts among the Western powers as their interests crisscrossed, and occasionally they had to shake a mailed fist at the Chinese government to obtain their "leases."

Britain took umbrage when a projected railroad financed by France and Russia threatened to cut across the British "zone" in the Yangtse valley. Arthur Balfour ominously notified China that a concession granted to build this railway would be looked upon by Britain "as an act of deliberate hostility against this country and [we] shall act accordingly."<sup>44</sup> To thrust this point home, the British fleet was concentrated in Chinese waters. The gesture was enough to gain for the British an additional concession.

Similarly, when a railway line financed by British capital was headed toward the Russian sphere in Manchuria, Russia protested vehemently to Britain. As a result, Russia and Britain more specifically defined their fields of operation in an agreement signed in April, 1899.

Though China remained nominally independent, due to the sharp rivalry of the several imperialist powers, it was by no means certain that even this tenuous independence could be maintained indefinitely. There were indications that underneath all the maneuverings for "spheres of influence," each power was preparing for the eventuality of a real partition of China in the way that Africa was at that very time being carved up. France in 1898 secured an agreement by which the Chinese government promised not to cede any part of the three southern provinces and the island of Hainan to any power other than France. Britain made herself secure in the Yangtse basin through a like agreement. "Each [power] regarded its sphere of interest as

the part of China which would fall to its lot when and if China should be dismembered," writes Parker T. Moon. "Russia would have Manchuria and all the territory north of the Great Wall; Germany, Shantung; France, the three southern provinces; and Great Britain, as usual, would carry off the richest share, the great Yangtse basin, with perhaps the mineral regions of Honan and Shansi." <sup>45</sup>

In the meantime, each power zealously guarded, and whenever possible expanded, its own special preserve. And all of them took great care to see that China remained feudalistic, divided, and militarily impotent. To this end, all supported every anti-democratic movement in China, and fought against any rising democratic tendencies and striving for genuine independence.

The weak but well-intentioned young Chinese Emperor Kwangsu, attempted a few minor reforms in 1898, in the hope of modernizing and strengthening China. But his reforms could not balance the successive leasing of ports to foreigners that resulted in ever greater exploitation of the Chinese peasantry by foreigners and Chinese overlords alike. While Kwangsu's reforms proved inadequate, peasant discontent reached the bursting point.

Into this chaotic situation the violently reactionary Dowager Empress Tsze-Hsi descended from her retirement. With the help of the ruthless general Yuan Shih-kai, she forced the emperor to acknowledge her as regent and nullified all the reform edicts. The peasant revolt which soon broke out was cunningly diverted by the Dowager Empress into an anti-European rebellion. This was the famous Boxer Rebellion, a confused attempt by the horribly exploited Chinese peasantry to find a way out of their misery.

Britain, Germany, Russia, Japan and the United States joined forces to crush the rebellion. European troops, once again swaggering into Peking, shamelessly looted the city and plundered the library containing the priceless works of genera-

tions of scholars. Legation guards were posted at Peking, and an indemnity of \$325,000,000 was imposed on China—just five years after China had promised an indemnity of \$170,000,000 to Japan.

In the decade that followed, national consciousness slowly developed in China, especially among the students and professional people. A revolutionary movement gathered momentum, directed primarily against Chinese feudalism. It received added impetus from the example of the Russo-Japanese war and the Russian revolution of 1905. Discontented farmers and Chinese businessmen who wished to see their feudal government modernized for their benefit, joined the revolutionary movement led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen.

On the tenth day of the tenth month in the year 1911, the Chinese Revolution began in Wuchang. The shrewd and opportunist General Yuan Shih-kai, who had previously sided with the Dowager Empress, went over to the revolutionaries. In an incredibly short time the Manchu dynasty was overthrown, and the Chinese Republic was born in February, 1912.

But China became a republic only in name. The Chinese Empire was loosely held together, and the fall of the titular emperor gave the provincial generals an opportunity to seize power in their own localities. Yuan Shih-kai betrayed the revolution, declared himself President of China, and intrigued to start a new dynasty bearing his name.

Foreign powers, taking advantage of this unsettled state of affairs, bargained for more concessions and mining rights from the provincial war lords. They found Yuan Shih-kai to their liking and loaned him money to help consolidate his power and stamp out all democratic elements from the revolutionary movement. Yuan, however, did not live long enough to become Emperor.

Civil war spread throughout China. The central government grew weaker, while war lords plundered the provinces and fought against one another to extend their power. In the south,

where revolutionary sentiment was strongest, Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his Kuomintang Party held to a precarious existence. This was the situation in China when the first world war began.

The war of 1914-18 gave Japan the chance to graduate from a junior partnership to a position of equality in the ranks of the imperialist powers. While the European powers were occupied with the war, and the United States was busy amassing huge war profits and later fighting by the side of the Allies, Japan strove hard to spread her control over China. "Now is the most opportune moment," observed the officers of the Japanese Black Dragon Society. "Such an opportunity will not occur again for hundreds of years to come."

Following the customary imperialist pattern, the Japanese Premier started by solemnly declaring that "Japan has no ulterior motive, no desire to secure more territory, no thought of depriving China or other peoples of anything which they now have." Then, as a member of the Allied Powers, Japan proceeded to take over the German territory in Kiaochow Bay.

In an attempt to tie up China in one bold move, the Japanese Minister on January 18, 1915 presented to the Peking government the diabolically ingenious Twenty-one Demands. China was asked to agree in advance to the transfer of all German rights and interests on Chinese soil to Japan; to permit Japanese monopoly control of natural resources, transportation systems, and capital investment in South Manchuria and Inner Mongolia; to give ninety-nine year leases of Port Arthur and Dalny to the Japanese; to allocate to Japan several railroad concessions already promised to Britain; to convert the Chinese Hanyeping iron and steel concern into a joint Sino-Japanese company; to agree "not to cede or lease to a third power any harbor, bay or island along the coast of China"; to let pass into Japan's control the province of Fukien, opposite the Japanese-owned island of Formosa; and to extend to the Japanese the same right to missionary activities enjoyed by Christians. The most important, all-inclusive demand required China to install Japanese "advisers" who would supervise the



Chinese army, police, and finance, and to buy at least half of her munitions from Japanese industrialists. This would have effectively turned China into the kind of "protectorate" made familiar by Western imperialists in Africa and in other parts of Asia.

At first, this was too much for even the corrupt ruling clique in Peking to swallow, but when Japan bullied them by threats of war, the Chinese government, on May 25, 1915, accepted the Japanese demands in slightly modified form. Later, the Peking government accepted in one year the loan of the enormous sum of 400 million Chinese dollars from Japan, in exchange for more mineral concessions.

Busy with the war in Europe, the Allies made no protest against Japan's demands on China. Japan had anticipated some opposition on the part of the European governments, and had worked out a secret agreement whereby the Allies confirmed her claims. Later, on November 2, 1917, Secretary Lansing of the United States assured Viscount Ishii that the American government recognized Japan's "special interests" in China. At the Peace Conference of 1919, despite some objections, the transfer of Germany's Chinese interests to Japan was confirmed.

Meanwhile, within China popular resentment at the way their government was selling out to Japan grew stronger and more bitter every day. When the terms of the Versailles Peace Treaty were made public, this resentment boiled over. Beginning May 4, 1919, 50 thousand Chinese students, together with innumerable farmers and workers, and even Chinese merchants, carried on demonstrations and a boycott of Japanese goods, in spite of brutal attempts to suppress them. Their agitation finally forced the resignation of those in the Chinese government who had sold out to the Japanese. Though it did not bring about any genuine change in the government, the May Fourth Movement marked a great advance in the political development of the Chinese people, and that date has ever since been celebrated as a milestone in modern Chinese history.

The United States emerged from the war of 1914-18 as a world power, conscious of its stake in distant lands. In 1922 a conference was held in Washington involving the nine powers having interests in the Far East. The United States, Great Britain, France, Japan, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Portugal, and China participated in the conference. Japan was made to relinquish her rights in Shantung. All powers consented to the maintenance of the "Open Door Policy" and the abolition of special "Spheres of Influence."

The revolutionary upsurge in China continued to mount. On January 20, 1924, Dr. Sun Yat-sen opened the first nationwide congress of the Kuomintang Party in Canton. Delegates came from all parts of China. The Kuomintang was reorganized, taking into its ranks all those who believed in an independent and democratic China, including the Chinese Communist Party. Dr. Sun clarified his "Three People's Principles," which were accepted by all as the basis for the "National Revolution." "People's Nationalism" was elaborated to mean freedom from foreign imperialist control as well as from Chinese feudal lords, and the equality of the many nationalities inhabiting China. "People's Democracy" was defined to mean the right of the Chinese people to freedom of speech, press, and assembly, to a democratic government elected by universal suffrage, and to organize into trade and farmers' unions. "People's Livelihood" presented a program of agrarian reform, protection of workers' rights, social insurance for workers, equal status for women, compulsory education, and a citizens' army to defend Free China.

Canton became the seat of the Nationalist Government, to which the patriotic Chinese flocked to swell the ranks of the new army. The government of the Soviet Union established friendly relations with the Canton government, renouncing the special rights and privileges extracted from China by the former Czarist government of Russia. In addition, the USSR sent military advisers to help establish the Whampoa Military Academy, where Chinese officers were trained.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen did not live to see the success of the revolutionary movement he led, as the Nationalist armies began their march of liberation through China in 1926 under General Chiang Kai-shek.

This second Chinese Revolution promised success even beyond the expectations of China's leaders. Often the inhabitants of towns and villages rose up against their local lords, took over their governments and handed them over to the Nationalist army as it appeared on the scene. This display of strength by the common people was an unpleasant surprise to the wealthy Chinese businessmen and the foreign imperialist powers. They observed with increasing concern that the 1926 revolution was carrying with it social as well as political changes. When the armed workers of Shanghai captured the government and welcomed the advancing Nationalist army, they decided it was time for them to intervene.

Quietly, they made a deal with Chiang Kai-shek, the businessmen offering financial help and the imperialist governments agreeing to recognize a new government of China headed by him. In return, Chiang was called upon to "restore order" by suppressing the workers, liquidating the trade unions, and throwing all progressive elements out of the Kuomintang. Chiang accepted the deal. He expelled the Communist Party and all liberal and democratic leaders, and drove them underground. With utmost brutality, Chiang destroyed the workers' organizations.

In October, 1928, Chiang Kai-shek formally established his government in Nanking. The Communists set up a government in the south. Other progressive and democratic groups were dispersed completely; some leaders went underground, while others escaped into voluntary exile.

Determined to crush the Communists, Chiang led a series of expeditions against them, but, because the Communist leaders had gained the enthusiastic support of the people in the south by putting into effect agrarian reforms and extending democratic rights, the expeditions failed.

In 1934 Chiang sent against the Communists an army of 700,000 soldiers, equipped with American arms, and an air force trained by Capt. James Doolittle, who was later to win fame in the second world war. The pressure of this large army, vastly outnumbering the Chinese Red Army, obliged the Communists to withdraw from the south.

On October 15, 1934, the Red Army of 90 thousand men, together with many women and children, broke through four lines of Chiang's fortifications, and began their famous Long March of 8 thousand miles to a new encampment in the north. Zigzagging south and west and then heading around to the north, the Red Army crossed eighteen mountain ranges and twenty-four rivers. They traveled more than a year, often fighting Chiang's troops sent in pursuit, and sometimes detouring many miles to elude them.

Among the many spectacular feats performed by the Red Army in its march to the north was the crossing of the Tatu River. The soldiers made friends with the wild Lolo tribesmen in the neighborhood of the river and safely reached the suspension bridge across the Tatu. There they found that the wooden planks had been removed from the iron chain spanning the gorge, and heard the warning sound of machine guns nestling in the woods on the opposite side of the river. Under withering fire from the guns, thirty young volunteers swung hand over hand by the iron chains across the surging waters of the Tatu. Those who survived captured the machine guns and then replaced the boards for the rest of the army to pass.

Early in 1936, the Communists settled down in the arid, sparsely settled land of Northwest China.

Meanwhile, in Japan, the government was in a tough spot; there was mass unemployment, and the world-wide depression had cut their lucrative export business to a minimum. In 1931, the ruling clique decided that to expand into China was the only prospect for getting a new market for their exports while thwarting the growing left movements that thrived during hard times. A war, the militarists suggested, would give the Japanese

government the excuse to use strong measures against popular discontent, while the industrialists and financiers would reap a neat harvest from war orders and imperialist expansion.

Then, too, the United States and Britain were fully occupied with domestic problems arising from the crash of 1929, and so would have no time to meddle in Japan's affairs. China was torn by civil war, and was ripe for picking. General Hondo, military commander of the Japanese forces in Manchuria guarding the Japanese-owned South Manchuria railroad, wrote to the Minister of War: "It is necessary immediately to take advantage of the world economic position as well as the circumstance that the Five-Year Plan of the Soviet Union is not yet completed, and that China is not a united country."

The customary pretext for aggression was conveniently found in the blowing up of a section of track on the South Manchurian Railway. A few hours after the explosion, strategically placed Japanese troops began their occupation of several widely separated cities of Manchuria. Within two days the whole of South Manchuria was in Japanese hands.

Public opinion urgently demanded that Chiang Kai-shek resist the Japanese advance in Manchuria. But Chiang was deeply involved in his third major campaign against the Chinese Communists in the south, and so he gave out a statement that it would take ten years before China would be strong enough to resist Japan. When Chang Hsueh-liang, the "Young Marshal" of Manchuria, flew to Nanking for assistance, Chiang coldly advised him to submit to Japan.

In far-off Geneva, any effective protest by the League of Nations was squelched by the British. "I confess that I see no reason why, either in act, or in word, or in sympathy, we should go individually, or internationally, against Japan in this matter," observed Leopold S. Amery, with refreshing frankness. "Who is there among us to cast the first stone and say that Japan ought not to have acted with the object of creating peace and order in Manchuria and defending herself against the continual aggression of vigorous Chinese Nationalism? Our whole

policy in India, our whole policy in Egypt, stands condemned if we condemn Japan." Colonel Amery became more discreet in his statements when later he held the post of Secretary of State for India.

Year after year Chiang Kai-shek made concessions to the Japanese. Without ever declaring war, Japan continued to push further into China from her base in Manchuria. Utilizing the rich resources of Manchuria, a powerful arsenal was built up in North China. Japanese businessmen, industrialists, and financiers screwed out of the subjugated people enormous profits by selling opium, drafting cheap labor, and lending money at 10 to 20 per cent interest compounded monthly.

Occupation forces did not find China a bed of roses. Guerilla forces harassed them night and day. In the section of China not yet overrun and so labeled Free China, students and liberal professional people clamored for a united effort against the invaders. Chiang Kai-shek threw into jail those who dared criticize his actions. He ignored the Communist plea for a united front against Japan, and continued to build an efficient army with the aid of German military experts and American air force equipment, which he made no secret was to be used, not against the Japanese, but against the Chinese Red Army.

Stationed in Sian, adjoining the Communist territory, was the former war lord of Manchuria, Chang Hsueh-liang. He was impressed with the sincerity and fighting ability of the Red Army, and informed Chiang Kai-shek that he and his troops were eager to fight the Japanese in the north. The Generalissimo despatched to Sian large supplies of military equipment including eighty bombing planes, and then followed to deliver in person his instructions to Chang to use the equipment only against the Red Army.

Chang effected the historic kidnaping of Chiang on the night of December 11, 1936. Thirteen of Chang's officers disarmed Chiang's bodyguards, and made him a captive, after a serio-comic chase of the Generalissimo clad in his nightshirt. They refused to release him until he promised cessation of the civil

war, liberation of all political prisoners, reorganization of the government on an all-party basis, and joint efforts by all forces to stop the Japanese.

News of Chiang's melodramatic capture, and of his stubborn refusal to accede to the demands of the Sian officers, reached the Communists. Chou En-lai, one of the Communist leaders, on whose head the Kuomintang government had placed a price of \$8,000, requested a conference with Chiang. Largely due to his persuasion, Chiang finally yielded and agreed to form a united front with the Red Army to fight the Japanese.

Faced with stiffening Chinese resistance the Japanese in 1937 decided to launch an all-out attack and finish the "China incident" before the going got too tough. They anticipated little interference from abroad. Europe was occupied with the war in Spain. Isolationist sentiment was strong in the United States, and American businessmen were pleased with the handsome returns from the sale to Japan of junk iron, obsolete airplanes, and inferior grades of oil. The Soviet Union was occupied in purging traitors from its army and government, and Britain merely looked with indulgence upon Japan, as a master might look upon an apt pupil. It was natural for the Japanese to conclude they would have a free hand when they gave China the *coup de grâce*.

The Sino-Japanese war, which began at 4:30 A.M. of July 8, 1937, did not end in the quick collapse of Chinese resistance, although unity in China lasted a woefully short time. The war dragged on and on, and merged into the second world war.

The name of the United States has already cropped up many times in this narrative of imperialist expansion. It is time to inquire into the nature of American imperialism.

Many Americans vigorously deny the existence of American imperialism. They explain away the conquest of the Philippines as a humanitarian act to rescue the Filipinos from Spanish oppression and to prepare them for eventual independence. Puerto Rico is looked upon as a minute blot on an otherwise clean

escutcheon. Hawaii is thought of more as a vacationland than as a colony. Before the second world war very few Americans could locate Guam and Samoa on a map, and those who knew of their existence were unfamiliar with the political relationship of these islands with the United States. There was little knowledge of the gigantic "invisible empire" of America.

Until the last decade of the nineteenth century, Americans had space enough to expand within the bounds of the continent. For a long time enterprising pioneers and traders could heed Horace Greeley's advice and trek westward, opening up vast territories to farming, mining, and industrial development. But by the 1890's, the frontier had vanished, large-scale production had been introduced in many branches of industry, heavy industry was passing into the hands of monopolists, and banking and industrial capital was merging to form finance capital. American capital had already been invested in Cuba and Hawaii. In the 1890's, however, American businessmen and financiers earnestly searched for controlled foreign markets for their surplus goods, outside sources of raw material to monopolize, and an outlet for profitable surplus capital investment.

Observing the way the world was rapidly being divided up by the European powers into colonies and spheres of influence, the United States earmarked Latin America as the special preserve of its industrial and financial magnates. In 1895, when there was a boundary dispute between British Guiana and Venezuela, American Secretary of State Richard Olney warned London against extending its Guiana frontier. "Today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent," he added, "and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition . . . its infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers."<sup>46</sup>

When it ventured into imperialism, the United States faithfully followed—within a brief period—all the methods of aggression successfully used by the European imperialist powers: Puerto Rico was made into an old-fashioned colony; the Phil-



ippines were taken over in the name of humanitarianism, and then had to be conquered all over again; the Virgin Islands were bought for 25 million dollars from Denmark; the Canal Zone was secured by lease in perpetuity; and the right to use Guantanamo on the coast of Cuba and Fonseca Bay on the coast of Nicaragua as naval bases was reminiscent of the right acquired by Germany and Japan to build naval bases on the coast of China.

This newcomer to the ranks of the world imperialist powers soon improved upon the technique of the old masters. The United States refined the method of financial penetration and eventual control of an economically backward country by means of loans and investments. Whereas similar practices by European imperialist powers often had led to annexation of the debtor countries, the United States contented itself with securing a firm grip on the finances of such countries, and maintaining this grip by internal political manipulations and occasional displays of American naval might. This has been aptly dubbed "Dollar Diplomacy." By this procedure, American industrialists and financiers gained effective economic domination of their "invisible empire" without the headaches that outright political annexation brings.

In 1898, at the very height of the rush for colonial possessions, the United States made a dramatic bid for its share. The island of Cuba, lying temptingly close to the Florida coast, had for long been coveted by America. Polk and Buchanan and Seward had toyed with the idea of filching this attractive morsel. The internal situation in Cuba in 1898 finally supplied the excuse for American intervention.

A rebellion against Spanish rule had been raging in Cuba for four years. This was upsetting to American sugar, tobacco, mining, and railway interests, who suffered large financial losses. American naval authorities hastened to point out the strategic location of Cuba in relation to the Gulf of Mexico. The press whipped up sentiment against the Spanish government's brutal treatment of the rebels. It was also found that

the Spanish authorities had thrown some American citizens into concentration camps along with the Cubans. On February 15, 1898, the United States battleship *Maine* was blown up in Havana harbor. It was taken for granted by Americans that the Spaniards had blown up the ship, although the charge was never proved. "Remember the *Maine*!" became the slogan of the day.

The hysterical war spirit roused in the United States worried the Great Powers of Europe; not wishing to see a budding rival extend its political influence, they appealed for a peaceful settlement. Spain, being weak militarily, offered to arbitrate the issue; the American citizens were released, and amnesty was promised to the Cuban rebels. Without notifying the Congress of Spain's latest concessions, President McKinley, on April 19, 1898, secured the authority to use American armed forces to free Cuba from Spanish misrule. The war lasted only four months, and, although it was fought ostensibly to defend the right of the people of Cuba "to be free and independent," the United States emerged out of it with special privileges in Cuba and full possession of the Philippines and Guam in the Pacific and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean.

Cuba was governed by an American military government for three years. While special commissioner Robert Porter labored hard to restore Cuban economy according to the needs of American business interests, the military government performed some genuinely constructive work in stamping out yellow fever, inaugurating public works, and promoting education.

In 1902, the governing of Cuba was handed over to the Cubans on terms that essentially transformed the island into an American protectorate. Among other conditions contained in the Platt Amendment, Cuba had to consent to United States control of her foreign policy and fiscal affairs; to grant the United States "lands necessary for coaling or naval stations"; and allow the United States "the right to intervene for the protection of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property and individual

liberty." The United States leased from Cuba Guantanamo Bay and Bahia Honda as naval stations for 2 thousand dollars a year. Cuba also signed a commercial treaty allowing Cuban sugar and other products entry into the United States at 20 per cent less duty than other foreign sugar, and permitting American manufactures to enter Cuba at 20 to 40 per cent less tariff than was charged other foreign goods. Thus, through treaty rights guarded by American marines, Cuban trade and investment were made secure for virtual American monopoly.

This state of affairs was made to order for internal trouble, and for the next twenty years American marines occupied Cuba almost without interruption. In 1934 President Franklin D. Roosevelt released Cuba "from the intervention trammels of the Platt Amendment." Nevertheless, Cuba remained tied to the apron strings of the United States. At the time of the second world war, American investment in Cuba amounted to 700 million dollars—one-fourth of the total American investment in Latin America.

Two months before the war with Spain in 1898, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt notified Commodore Dewey to have his fleet in China waters ready to sail to the Philippine islands at a moment's notice.

Spain's long occupation of the islands had been punctuated by more than thirty major revolts by the Filipinos. On December 30, 1896, the Spanish government executed the brilliant scholar and national hero José Rizal y Mercado. This was a signal for a revolutionary upsurge, with Emilio Aguinaldo as general of the revolutionary army, advised by the paralytic Apolinario Mabini, known as "the brains of the revolution."

When war was declared against Spain, Dewey received a cablegram to "Proceed at once to the Philippine islands." On May 1, 1898, after only a few hours' fighting against the decrepit Spanish fleet, Dewey was ready to land his forces on Philippine soil. In the meantime Aguinaldo's insurgents had already vanquished the Spanish garrisons throughout the island of Luzon and proclaimed a Filipino republic. Looking upon the

Americans as genuine liberators, Aguinaldo co-operated with Dewey's forces in bringing to an end Spanish rule in the islands. But on August 13, 1898, American troops alone entered the city of Manila, which had been under siege by Filipino troops.

In far-off Washington, D.C., President William McKinley "went down on [his] knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night" over what should be done with the Philippines. At last, late one night, light came to him—he did not "know how it was, but it came." The enlightened President decided that giving the Philippines back to Spain "would be cowardly and dishonorable"; turning them over to rival businessmen in France or Germany "would be bad business and discreditable"; and leaving the Filipinos alone was unthinkable because "they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule worse than Spain's war." Having thus cleared his conscience, President McKinley came to the conclusion that "there was nothing left for us to do but take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and christianize them as our fellow men for whom Christ also died." The President then "went to bed, and went to sleep, and slept soundly."<sup>47</sup> It is a pity to add to this affecting little tale, but for the record it must be stated that the President was cautious enough to buttress divine guidance with detailed reports of the economic and strategic value of the islands.

The Filipinos, most of whom were converted to Christianity during Spanish rule, failed to be impressed by President McKinley's divine revelation. On February 4, 1899, war broke out anew for independence. It took sixty thousand American soldiers nearly three years to capture Aguinaldo and to finally overcome the last guerilla fighters. In 1902 civil government was restored in the Philippines, with William Howard Taft as the first governor.

While Dewey was fighting the Spaniards in the Philippines, President McKinley brought Hawaii under the Stars and Stripes—this time without benefit of divine inspiration.

The Hawaiian Islands had already become economically valuable to the United States. Americans and Europeans had acquired large sugar plantations there and, after the commercial treaty of 1876, Hawaiian commodities were shipped into the United States free of duty. In 1887, Queen Liliuokalani had granted American ships the exclusive right to use Pearl Harbor as a coaling station and naval base.

When the McKinley Tariff placed Cuban sugar on the free list in 1890, Hawaiian sugar lost its preferential status. Prices fell, and the Americans, who owned 74 per cent of the sugar plantations, hastily conferred with the American Minister to Hawaii John L. Stevens.

Stevens offered a remarkable remedy. In a "confidential" letter of Nov. 20, 1892 he argued that Hawaii, admirably suited for a naval base and cable station, should be annexed to the United States lest it become another Singapore under the British flag. "Destiny and the vast future interests of the United States in the Pacific," he wrote, "clearly indicate who, at no distant day, must be responsible for the government of these islands." <sup>48</sup> Stevens did not forget the sugar interests. Besides the annexation of Hawaii, he recommended a subsidy of twelve dollars per ton by the United States government to the owners of the Hawaiian sugar plantations.

Events moved rapidly after this. On January 16, 1893, a Committee of Public Safety composed of American, British, and German businessmen called on the American Minister for help. With the aid of American marines ordered on shore by Stevens, the Committee deposed Queen Liliuokalani, took over the government buildings and treasury, and set up a Provisional government headed by Americans. Stevens immediately recognized the new government, which, in turn, requested union with the United States. On February 15, 1893, President Benjamin Harrison laid before the Senate a treaty of annexation.

The Senate, however, failed to act promptly. President Grover Cleveland, taking office the following month, reversed

Harrison's policy. When William McKinley became President four years later, he ratified the treaty and Hawaii became a territorial possession of the United States.

After the Spanish-American War, Central America drew the attention of the United States. For a long time there had been discussions as to the possibility of constructing a canal through the narrow strip holding together North and South America, thereby securing a short-cut from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Theodore Roosevelt, with characteristic vigor, decided to push the scheme to conclusion.

The first hurdle to overcome was the concession to build a canal across Panama, which Colombia had given to a French company headed by Ferdinand de Lesseps of Suez Canal fame. This was disposed of by an offer of 40 million dollars to the French company. Next, the Colombian minister was persuaded to sign a treaty in 1903, granting the United States a ninety-nine year lease of a six-mile-wide strip of land across the Isthmus of Panama. The United States agreed in return to pay 10 million dollars and an annual rent of a quarter million dollars. Then came a snag: the Colombian Senate refused to ratify the treaty.

This did not faze the former commander of the Rough Riders. He decided to go through with the Canal project without the approval of the Colombian government. "I should be delighted if Panama were an independent state; or if it made itself so at this moment," he wrote to Dr. Albert Shaw on October 10, 1903, "but for me to say so publicly would amount to an instigation of a revolt, and therefore I cannot say it."<sup>49</sup> Strangely enough, in less than a month after this letter was written, there was a revolution in Panama, and the republic of Panama was established with the help of American marines.

Before it was dry behind the ears, the new-born republic signed a treaty with the United States, on November 18, 1903. It was not surprising that the treaty granted to the United States a lease in perpetuity over a ten-mile-wide canal zone, with sovereign rights and the right to fortification. The re-

public of Panama was to receive the 10 million dollars previously offered to Colombia, and, beginning in 1911, an annual rent of \$250,000.

The Panama Canal was opened to traffic on August 15, 1914, and was unquestionably a boon to commerce. It brought many lands in the Pacific Ocean vastly closer to the industrial eastern seaboard of the United States, thereby accelerating American foreign trade to an enormous extent. Within ten years it handled a greater tonnage than the Suez Canal. Most important of all, the Panama Canal supplied the United States with another—and strategically more important—naval base on the Caribbean Sea.

But militarily the Canal would be impotent unless the United States had easy and secure access to it from home. In order to ensure British control of the Suez Canal, Britain had extended her domination over lands nearby. The United States, likewise, began to draw within its sphere of influence the countries of Central America, for the protection of the Panama Canal.

American commercial penetration into Central America went hand in hand with indirect political influence. The United States encouraged a successful rebellion in Costa Rica, thereby preventing the British from getting an oil concession there, and also making Costa Rica safe for the United Fruit Company. In Nicaragua the American government played the role of king-maker, thrust loans upon their puppet, secured Nicaraguan railways for American bankers, and put an American in control of the customs revenues. Four years later, in 1915, the United States forestalled the building of any rival canal project through Nicaragua by obtaining exclusive rights to build any such canal. The Nicaraguan government at the same time generously threw in a ninety-nine year lease of the Corn Islands and the right to erect a naval base on the Gulf of Fonseca.

The ubiquitous American marines landed in Honduras in 1924 to restore order, for the benefit of American mine and banana plantation owners. In Salvador the United Fruit Com-

pany appears again. Salvador made a loan contract with Minor C. Keith, head of the United Fruit Company, for \$21,500,000, to be raised by issuing bonds. "Part of the issue consisted of six per cent bonds to cancel an old English loan; another part consisted of eight per cent bonds sold to New York bankers at 88% of their face value and redeemable at 105% of their face value; and a third part, seven per cent bonds." Nicaragua had to pledge seventy per cent of its customs revenues to pay interest and sinking fund charges on the loan. What if Nicaragua some day denounced this arrangement? The stipulation was that any dispute over the contract would be settled by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The bankers were quite confident that any decision would be in their favor, and that the United States would back it up with military force if necessary. "There is a precedent in a dispute between Costa Rica and Panama," a confidential circular stated, "in which a warship was sent to carry out the verdict of the arbitrators."<sup>60</sup> The Big Stick again.

In measured words worthy of Winston Churchill at his Tory best, Theodore Roosevelt expressed the policy of the United States toward its neighbors. "Any country whose people conduct themselves well," he declared on December 6, 1904, "can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in the general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power."<sup>61</sup>

The United States thus assumed the responsibility of policing the Western Hemisphere, looking upon the countries to the



south as virtual protectorates. In pursuit of this policy the right to collect the customs revenues of the Dominican Republic was handed over to Americans in 1904 by executive order, though the United States Senate did not ratify a treaty sanctioning this order till 1907. A few years later Washington demanded greater economic concessions from the Dominican government. This demand was backed up by the landing of American Marines who assumed control of the government in 1916 when the Dominicans rejected the American demands. After eight years of Marine rule, a Dominican government was formed that was amenable to American demands. The United States Marines departed in 1924, leaving the financial control of the country effectively in the hands of the National City Bank of New York.

Haiti, next door to the Dominican Republic, could hardly escape American attention. In 1914 the United States demanded the right to collect customs revenues, but was turned down by the Haitian government. The French, whom the Haitians once threw out of their country, took the initiative and landed Marines on Haiti in June, 1915. American Marines landed in July. On July 28, American newspapers reported that Haitian President Villbrun Guillaume Sam had executed two hundred political prisoners two days previous and was himself beheaded by furious citizens the next day. More American Marines disembarked to restore order.

The Marines made themselves at home in Haiti for the next eighteen years. During that time Americans tightened their grip on the country's economy, buying up land, sugar mills, public utilities, and various agricultural and mineral resources. American bankers purchased control of the Banque d'Haiti. Marine rule was declared by an official American report to be characterized by "freedom from all selfish aims."

The reappearance of the Marines with such monotonous regularity, as recounted above, is but a partial list of their itinerary. In November, 1935, in *Common Sense* magazine, Major-General Smedley D. Butler wrote:

I spent thirty-three years and four months in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force—the Marine Corps. I served in all commissioned ranks from a second lieutenant to a major-general. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street, and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism. . . .

Thus I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. . . . I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909–12. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested.

During those years I had, as the boys in the back room would say, a swell racket. I was rewarded with honors, medals, promotion. Looking back on it, I feel I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best *he* could do was to operate his racket in three city districts. We Marines operated on three continents.<sup>62</sup>

It was thus that the American government fulfilled its recruiting pledge: "Join the Marines and See the World."

The crudity of early American imperialist adventurers was gradually replaced by much subtler economic penetration. Munificent loans were made to Latin American governments, to be followed by American financial "advisers" to protect these loans. Intractable heads of governments were deposed by promoting "revolutions." When Britain, a heavy investor in Latin America, was occupied with the first world war, United States companies obtained control of the Latin American transportation and communications systems. J. P. Morgan and the Grace interests, the Matson and the Ward lines took over railroads and gained almost exclusive control of shipping over the west coast of South America and the Gulf of Mexico. American news services elbowed out the Reuters and Havas agencies. The Associated Press, United Press, and Hearst's International sold American trade propaganda together with the news of the world. Carleton Beals quotes Roy Howard of the UP as telling

the Pittsburgh Club in 1916 that American news agencies "should have years ago begun trail-blazing for our commercial control."

American banks such as the National City Bank (through the International Banking Corp.), First National of Boston, the Mercantile Bank of America, and the Chase National Bank built a vast network of branches, bringing the economy of most Latin American countries under their tight control. The American and Foreign Power Company, a subsidiary of Electric Bond and Share, swallowed up most of the light and power resources of the countries to the south, while other American concerns took over the exploitation of oil and various mineral resources of these countries.

In the 1920's and '30's other nations gradually began to encroach on the Latin American market. Britain, Germany, and Japan, and even Italy started to compete with the Americans. Popular sentiment in Latin America grew universally hostile to "Yankee Imperialism." President Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurated the Good Neighbor policy. "In the field of world policy," he said, "I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor: the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others."<sup>53</sup> With the Western Hemisphere especially in mind, he said: "The essential qualities of a true Pan-Americanism must be the same as those which constitute a good neighbor, namely, mutual understanding and, through such understanding, a sympathetic appreciation of the other's point of view."<sup>54</sup>

But war was already imminent, and the first good-neighborly acts were mainly in the nature of plans to preserve territorial integrity and to formulate military alliances. By the time the second world war came, the Good Neighbor policy had not been translated into economic terms.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century yet another method of colonial acquisition was developed by the European powers. This was the mandate system, which went into effect

after the first world war. Its history is worthy of consideration, because the present day trusteeship plan of the United Nations still bears a considerable resemblance to the earlier mandate system.

By the first decade of the twentieth century a world war had become inevitable as a result of the situation created by world imperialism, and it was a foregone conclusion that Britain and Germany would be the main antagonists in such a war.

Germany arrived late in the game of imperialist expansion. Before 1870, Britain already possessed a large colonial empire. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in the bitter race for larger markets Britain and France outdistanced Germany. In the incredibly short period of thirty years Britain added 4,754,000 square miles and 88 million people to her already huge empire. In even less time France enlarged her empire by 3,583,580 square miles of territory with a population of 36,553,000. In these same years Germany lagged way behind with a gain of 1,026,220 square miles and 16,687,100 people.

Early in the twentieth century German heavy industry shot forward rapidly. Germany became a first-rate capitalist power, and the division of the colonial world based upon the relative strength of the European powers in the previous century became untenable.

As long as Britain and Germany were unprepared for a major war, Anglo-German rivalry remained confined to areas that were economically backward but only semi-colonial: Latin America, the Balkans, and the decaying Turkish Empire. In the years before the war German trade in Latin America increased from 16 per cent to 19 per cent, while British trade fell from 31 per cent to 28 per cent, and in the Balkans German trade increased from 18.1 per cent to 29.2 per cent while that of Britain declined from 24 per cent to 14.9 per cent. The American eagle, meanwhile, was spreading its wings over Latin America, and was transforming that continent more and more into a special hunting ground of American monopolists. So the

Balkans and the Turkish empire became the main area of intrigue carried on by Britain and Germany and their respective partners.

Kaiser Wilhelm II made a good will trip to Turkey in October, 1898. The result of the visit was soon apparent. "As economic results of the Kaiser's trip," wrote Foreign Minister von Bülow, "we may regard the allotment of a concession for the construction of a harbor in Haidar Pasha, the concession for a German cable between Constanza and Constantinople, the strengthening of the existing relations between the Turkish government and great German firms. Through the cable concession we arrive in possession of a direct telegraphic connection with Constantinople, which probably will serve as the beginning for a new world line. Here we should also note the plan for a continuation of the Anatolian railways to Bagdad, whereby, we may hope, the foundation will be laid for the further economic opening of Asia Minor."<sup>55</sup>

Of all these concessions the railway project, contracted for in March, 1903, became the most important. It grew into the grandiose scheme of a Berlin-to-Baghdad overland route under German control, passing through Serbia and menacing both British and Russian interests. It would jeopardize the Suez Canal and the route to India, and block Russian ambition to possess Constantinople. "The Near East is the only region in the world not yet appropriated by a Great Power," A. Sprenger wrote. ". . . If Germany does not lose the opportunity, but seizes it before the Cossacks stretch out their hands in that direction, she will have acquired the best share in the partition of the world."<sup>56</sup> And the German publicist Paul Rohrbach candidly explained in *Die Bagdadbahn* that by means of the Berlin-Baghdad railway Germany would be able to cut Britain's imperial lifeline to India and Africa.

The scene was set for an explosion sooner or later. Both rival powers looked for allies, stepped up their armaments programs, and at the same time explored the possibilities of patching up their differences by a peaceful division of colonies.

It was obvious that France would side with Britain, since France and Germany were ancient enemies and also because Britain had allowed France a free hand in Morocco in return for exclusive British control over Egypt. Russia and Britain composed their differences in the Middle East by signing an agreement on August 31, 1907. Both of them solemnly promised "to respect the integrity and independence of Persia," and then proceeded to divide the victim of their respect into three zones: the north going to Russia, the southeast to Britain, and an in-between zone remaining neutral for the time being. Against the Anglo-French-Russian bloc of great colonial powers stood the lesser colony-owning powers of Germany, Austria and—until she was bought out by the Allies—Italy.

Britain and Germany carried on a feverish naval race. Lord Haldane overhauled the British Army. Germany and Austria increased the strength of their standing armies from 950,000 in 1899 to 1,011,000 in 1907 and 1,239,000 in 1914; France and Russia increased theirs from 1,470,000 to 1,813,000 and then to 2,239,000. The expenditures on armament were so enormous that war was inevitable if only to avoid bankruptcy.

At the same time Britain, France, and Russia tried out the old method of give-and-take to come to terms with Germany. As late as June 15, 1914, Britain and France made a secret agreement for the partition of the Turkish empire into four spheres of influence. Britain was to receive lower Mesopotamia and Smyrna; France's share was to be southern Syria and northern Anatolia; Russia was to have Armenia; and Germany was to get the rest of Anatolia, Syria, and Mesopotamia. But it was too late. The circle of colonial expansion had become too narrow, and the tension was too great. A world war was almost precipitated over Bosnia in 1908, over Tripoli in 1911, and over the Balkan Wars of 1912. The shooting of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria at Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, was the "incident" that sparked the war fuse.

The first world war was fought by rival imperialist powers for a greater share of the colonial world. Germany and Austria

were admittedly out for expansion at the expense of the British and French empires. Britain and France and their allies were just as eager to expand as they were determined to hold on to their possessions. Even before the war, in fact, the Great Powers had been licking their chops in anticipation of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. "All the Great Powers without exception envisage an early dismemberment of Turkey," wrote the Russian Prime Minister Sergei Sazanov to the Czar Nicholas in the autumn of 1913, "and are even now occupied in consolidating the bases of their political pretensions in the future division of Asia Minor."<sup>57</sup>

Soon after the war began, members of the Allied powers put in their bids and commenced staking their claims. Czar Nicholas demanded Constantinople. "To me, the war against Germany and Austria and the alliance with France and Britain are but different means tending towards one single goal: I want Constantinople . . .," said the Czar to Maurice Paléologue, the French Ambassador. "Of course, I want France also to come out of this war greater and stronger. I agree in advance to all the French government's desiderata. Let France take Alsace, take the left bank of the Rhine, take Mainz and Coblenz, take anything you want, *monsieur l'ambassadeur*, but I must have Constantinople . . ." <sup>58</sup> On March 10, 1915, the British government, through its ambassador Sir George Buchanan, notified the Czar that after the war Russia would get Constantinople and a free hand in northern Persia, in return for an extension of the British sphere of influence from southern Persia into the neutral zone.

Italy climbed off the fence on the Allied side when on April 26, 1915, Britain and France promised her the Dodecanese and the Adalia district of Asia Minor as her "just share" in the division of the carcass of the Turkish Empire, and "compensation" in Africa. Later, in 1917, Italy was also promised the southern coast of Anatolia and the province of Smyrna. In May, 1916, Sir Mark Sykes and M. George Picot worked out for Britain and France the division of the Turkish empire

between themselves. In February, 1917, Britain agreed to support Japan's claim to the German rights in China and the German islands north of the equator, "it being understood that the Japanese government . . . will . . . treat in the same spirit Great Britain's claims to the German islands south of the equator."

When Turkey threw in its lot with Germany, a host of British agents worked feverishly to stir up a revolt of the Arab chiefs who owed allegiance to the Turkish sultan. Unwilling to put all her eggs in one basket, Britain chose Sherif Hussein of Mecca and Emir Ibn Saud of Nejd, giving both of them financial aid and promises of future sovereignty over the Arab world. Hussein was the first choice of the British government. Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Cairo, carried on a lengthy correspondence with Hussein over the boundaries of the future independent Arab kingdom. After some haggling they reached a compromise. On October 25, 1915, McMahon informed Hussein that "Great Britain is prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs in all the regions within the limits demanded by the Sherif of Mecca." But this pledge was not given unequivocally; there were a couple of big-brotherly qualifications attached to it. "When the situation admits," McMahon added, "Great Britain will give to the Arabs her advice and will assist them to establish what may appear to be the most suitable forms of government in those various territories. On the other hand, it is understood that the Arabs have decided to seek the advice and guidance of Great Britain only, and that such European advisers and officials as may be required for the formation of a sound form of administration will be British."

In March, 1917, the Russian Revolution foreshadowed the inevitable withdrawal of Russia from the war, putting the Allies in a precarious position. The United States entered the war in April, 1917, tipping the balance in favor of the Allies. To gain further good will, toward the end of the year Arthur



Balfour wrote to Lord Rothschild that "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish Communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country."

The Soviet Union came into being in November, 1917. In the Czar's archives the Soviet government found copies of the secret treaties embodying the Allied Powers' division of the spoils of the war. On November 24, 1917, the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia* published the text of the treaties, which were reprinted by the *Manchester Guardian* on January 19, 1918.

When Hussein learned of the contents of these treaties, he let out a howl of protest. For some time Commander D. G. Hogarth, C.M.G., R.N.V.R., of the Arab Bureau in Cairo, undertook the job of pacifying Hussein. He notified Hussein, among other things, that "The *Entente Powers* are determined that the Arab race shall be given full opportunity of once again forming a nation in the world." Then he wrote McMahon that Hussein treated British "proclamations and exhortations about it (Arab unity) as good intentions but no more . . ." In June, 1918, on behalf of the British government, Commander Hogarth and O. Walrond, C.M.G., announced that in regard to "Areas in Arabia which were free and independent before the outbreak of the war" and "Areas emancipated from Turkish control by the action of the Arabs themselves during the present war," Britain was willing to "recognize the complete and sovereign independence of the Arabs inhabiting these areas and support them in their struggle for freedom"; that "In regard to the areas occupied by Allied forces . . . the future government of these regions should be based upon the principle of the consent of the governed, and this policy has and will continue to have the support of His Majesty's Government"; and that

in regard to "Areas still under Turkish control," His Majesty's Government desired "that the oppressed peoples of these areas should obtain their freedom and independence."

But Hussein, his son Feisal, and other Arab chiefs were becoming worried by the behavior of the British military forces in the Middle East. Instead of acting like armies of liberation, they seemed instead to be settling down for a long stay. In October, 1918, General Sir Edmund Allenby officially assured Feisal that military administration was "purely provisional" and "the Allies were in honour bound to endeavour to reach a settlement in accordance with the wishes of the peoples concerned." Allenby urged Feisal "to place his trust wholeheartedly in their (the Allies') good faith."

As the war drew to a close, popular unrest mounted in the colonial world. The Russian Revolution was inspiring national liberation movements in many imperialist possessions. Together with this, there was growing cynicism toward the proclamations that the Allied Powers released for public consumption. The effect of the disclosure of the Sykes-Picot agreement, especially, was difficult to overcome. In a desperate effort to keep the situation under control until the war was over, Britain and France made a joint declaration on November 7, 1918. In order that what happened later to the territories to which it referred may be fully appreciated, this whole declaration by the two powers is quoted:

The object aimed at by France and Great Britain in prosecuting in the East the war let loose by the ambition of Germany is the complete and definite emancipation of the peoples so long oppressed by the Turks and the establishment of national Governments and Administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations.

In order to carry out these intentions France and Great Britain are at one in encouraging and assisting the establishment of indigenous Governments and Administrations in Syria and Mesopotamia, now liberated by the Allies, and in the territories the liberation of which they are engaged in securing, and recognizing these as soon as they are actually established.

Far from wishing to impose on the populations of these

regions any particular institutions, they are only concerned to ensure by their support and by adequate assistance the regular working of Governments and Administrations freely chosen by the populations themselves. To secure impartial and equal justice for all, to facilitate the economic development of the country by inspiring and encouraging local initiative, to favour the diffusion of education, to put an end to dissensions that have too long been taken advantage of by Turkish policy, such is the policy which the two Allied Governments uphold in the liberated territories.

Before the ink was dry on this noble statement, Britain, France, Belgium, and Italy rushed to make quick disposal of the colonial spoils. Russia was out of the running, for the government of the Soviet Union condemned imperialism and repudiated the Czarist policies. But three cub imperialists demanded their share of colonies: Australia, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa followed the Mother Country. To Jan Christian Smuts of South Africa goes the dubious honor of fathering the terms of the mandate system.

On January 23, 1919, at the Paris Peace Conference, Lloyd George, backed by Clemenceau and Sonnino, proposed an immediate division of the territorial prizes of the war. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States strongly opposed this move. Next day, the Prime Ministers of New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and Canada trooped in by the side of Lloyd George to demand outright annexation of the countries the Allied Powers had already allocated to themselves. Wilson refused to be impressed by this display of solidarity. "The world would say," he replied, "that the Great Powers first portioned out the helpless parts of the world, and then formed a League of Nations."

President Wilson himself had no clear-cut program for the German colonies and the dismantled Ottoman empire, except that he wanted to leave the door open for future American business expansion in these regions. His pronouncements up to that time had been characterized by a vague humanitarian approach clothed in generalities. "A free, open-minded, and

absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims," he had observed in Point Five of his Fourteen Points speech, "based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined." When American experts were called upon to give body to this unprecise formulation of the President, there were more concrete indications of how the United States looked upon the question of colonial settlement. George Louis Beer, advising the American government as an expert on African affairs, recommended that backward countries might be "entrusted by international mandate to one state," on condition that "there should be embodied in the deed of trust most rigid safeguards to protect the native population from exploitation and also to ensure that the interests of other foreign states are not injured." This was quite clearly in the traditional imperialist pattern, whereby the clause safeguarding business interests was preceded by a humanitarian clause against exploitation of the colonial people.

The conflict between the Wilsonian and the Allied Powers' plans was solved by a compromise worked out by the cold and astute imperialist Jan Christian Smuts, aided by the facile former editor of the *Round Table*, Philip Kerr. To those who still believe that imperialists can be trusted to produce a compromise formula for their own gradual liquidation, the remarkable Smuts-Kerr document is recommended for serious study. This document is a gem of sheer hypocrisy, of skillful manipulation of words by which avarice is made to appear as aid to the downtrodden.

Incorporated as Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the mandate system contained the following provisions:

1. To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late War have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be ap-

plied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

2. The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.

3. The character of the Mandate must differ according to the stage of the development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and other similar circumstances.

4. Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory.

5. Other peoples, especially those of Central Africa, are at such a stage that the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion, subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals, the prohibition of abuses such as the slave trade, and arms traffic and the liquor traffic, and the prevention of the establishment of fortifications or military and naval bases and of military training of the natives for other than police purposes and the defence of territory, and will also secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other Members of the League.

6. There are territories, such as South-West Africa and certain of the South Pacific Islands, which, owing to the sparseness of their population, or their small size, or their remoteness from the centres of civilization, or their geographical contiguity to the territory of the Mandatory, and other circumstances, can be best administered under the laws of the Mandatory as integral portions of its territory, subject to the safeguards above-mentioned in the interests of the indigenous population.

7. In every case of Mandate, the Mandatory shall render to

the Council an annual report in reference to the territory committed to its charge.

8. The degree of authority, control, or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory shall, if not previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, be explicitly defined in each case by the Council.

9. A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the Mandates.

Behind the brilliant rhetoric of Article 22 there lurked astonishingly fallacious theories and false statements. Point 1 established the principle of trusteeship over "colonies and territories . . . inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world." If this principle had any genuine validity, Belgium, France, Italy, and Britain herself should have qualified for colonial rather than mandatory status. Surely Belgium, for example, could not stand alone either economically or militarily "under the strenuous conditions of the modern world."

Point 2 described the qualifications of the mandatory powers as "advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility." The material resources of the Allied Powers were drawn largely from the colonies they already controlled. If the words "advanced" and "resources" referred to the mandatory powers' technological development, it was ridiculous to assume that the Arabs, the Africans, and the Pacific Islanders could not develop them as free peoples, in the same manner as the Allied Powers had done in the past. If the word "advanced" were used in the sense of social development, it should have been taken into account that social advance *followed* economic development, and there was every reason to believe that, given economic and technological aid without political control, the "backward" countries would also advance socially. And certainly, on the basis of social advance, Japan could hardly qualify as a mandatory power.

As far as "experience" was concerned, there was little to choose between the experience of Germany and that of the Allied Powers in colonial administration. The Allied Powers did not wage war against Germany because of German maladministration of colonies. From the standpoint of the colonial people all imperialist powers, despite minor variations in administration, were equally obnoxious and deserved complete obliteration.

It should be noted also that the shrewd team of Smuts and Kerr realized the absurdity of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand qualifying as mandatories "by reason of their resources, their experience." To make these chips of the old block eligible for mandates, the alternative—not additional—qualification of "their geographical position" was slyly inserted in Point 2 of Article 22.

There were certain striking weaknesses of omission in this mandate grab bag. Article 22 contained no right of appeal by the mandated people, nor was there any indication of the authority to whom appeal could be made. For all that one could deduce from this document, tutelage could last till doomsday, since no time limit was set nor authority mentioned to decide when the wards were "able to stand by themselves." President Wilson's provision that the League of Nations should attempt through the mandatories "to build up in as short a time as possible out of the people or territory under its guardianship a political unit which can take charge of its own affairs" was simply ignored by Smuts and Kerr.

The tongue-in-cheek word in Article 22 was "experience." Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, and Japan awarded the mandates to themselves because of their experience in governing colonial people. Yet it was precisely their past experience in colonial administration that should have disqualified them from holding any mandates. At the time of the Paris Peace Conference enough was known of the malpractices of imperialist powers in their colonies to puncture the self-adulatory pretensions of these powers. Nevertheless, there were many liberals in

Europe and America who considered the mandate system a genuine boon to the "backward" people.

In an attempt to give depth and solidity to the thin screen of Article 22, the Allied Powers later graded the mandates into three groups. Those that came under Point 5 of the Article, where tutelage was presumably considered definitely temporary, were classified as "A" mandates. Even here the double-talk was so palpable that one wonders how anyone could be taken in by it. For, while the Allied Powers seemed to admit that the people in the "A" mandates had already reached "a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized," they vehemently denied that the people of India, Indonesia, Burma, Indo-China, and other such colonies had reached even political adolescence. Yet the Indians, Indonesians, and other such colonials had reached at least as high a stage of development as the countries included in the "A" mandates. After this remarkable bit of logic, the Allied Powers proceeded to include in the "B" and "C" categories those countries that fell under Points 5 and 6, respectively, of Article 22.

When the time came for the mandatorys to take over jurisdiction, even the slim promises made in Article 22 were not honored. This could be seen by what happened in the "A" mandates of Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, and Palestine. Syria was taken by France, and the other three were grabbed by Britain. Though Point 4 of Article 22 advised that "The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory," it will be recalled that long before the Paris Peace Conference the two European powers had awarded themselves these colonial plums. Nevertheless, Britain and France went through the motions of receiving them through the League of Nations. For Palestine the League framed a special mandate, exhorting Britain to create "such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National home," while giving her the right "at all times to use the roads, railways and ports of Palestine for the movement of armed forces and the carriage of fuel and supplies."



Syria was one of the countries "so long oppressed by the Turks" to whom, on November 7, 1918, Britain and France had pledged their assistance for "the establishment of national Governments and Administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations." Soon after the war was over, Britain tried to realize her dream of an Arab world under British hegemony by putting up Hussein's son Feisal as ruler of Syria. But France refused to accept this as an accomplished fact and to let Britain renege on her earlier agreement. During the Peace Conference, a commission of investigation sent to Syria by President Wilson returned with the verdict that the Syrians overwhelmingly desired independence. Nevertheless, in 1920, 90,000 French soldiers under General Henri Gouraud kicked Feisal out and took forcible possession of Syria for France. On September 29, 1923, the League of Nations duly approved the French mandate over Syria.

From the very beginning the Syrians opposed French rule. There were mass demonstrations, in which Arab women took part, and many local insurrections; these were energetically put down. France was obliged to station a large French army in Syria; but, as suppression only strengthened the Syrian desire for independence, France sought to weaken Syrian nationalism by splitting the small country into five separate states: Syria proper, Lebanon, Jebel Druze, Alexandretta, and the Alawiyya (later called Latakia). In order to win over the Maronite Christian population of Lebanon, France granted them a special status and their own flag, the French tricolor with a cedar superimposed on the white ground.

The French attempt to rule the country by dividing the people roused the Syrians to greater fury. Proclaiming it "their duty to educate the Syrians to political maturity and independence," the French suspended civil liberties, honeycombed the country with spies and secret police, and appointed, *carefully* screened Syrians as "loyal" officials. *Secretly*

Sensing trouble in the land of the Druzes over forced labor

extracted by the government, the French Governor invited the Druze leaders to a conference in the summer of 1925, and then held them as hostages. Rebellion immediately broke out among the Druzes, which soon spread and developed into a war for Syrian freedom.

The insurgent Syrians set up a Provisional government in Jebel Druze. They proclaimed their demand for "the complete independence of Syria, one and indivisible . . . the free election of a Constituent Assembly to draft the constitution, the withdrawal of the foreign army of occupation, and the creation of a national army to guarantee security and apply the principles of the French Revolution and the Rights of Man."<sup>69</sup>

Syria was a small country with less than 3 million inhabitants, yet the well-equipped French Army had to fight a long and bitter war to restore French power. General Sarrail's troops terrorized the Syrians by burning down numerous villages and heavily bombarding the historic city of Damascus. It was an unequal battle to begin with; after more than two years of warfare, Syrian resistance collapsed.

With the revolt crushed, the French proceeded to apply some salve to Syria's wounds. They consented to the election of a Constituent Assembly, but divided the electorate according to religion (as the British were to do in India). Moslems, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox Church members, and Jews were compelled to vote for one of their own religious group. The purpose of erecting such electoral compartments was partially revealed when it was found that the Protestant leader of the nationalists could not be elected because he did not fall into any of the classifications; and, when the Moslems offered to give up one of their ten seats in his favor, the French government turned it down.

Despite such disrupting maneuvers on the part of the French government, the nationalists controlled the Constituent Assembly. A republican constitution was drawn up by the Assembly, ignoring France and the mandate altogether. The French were willing to approve of this constitution, provided a

clause were inserted in it to the effect that, as long as the mandate continued, no article in the constitution should be applied in a manner that would conflict with France's obligations under the mandate. As the Constituent Assembly refused to insert this clause, the French government dissolved the Assembly. Then the government itself promulgated the constitution, including the controversial clause, for Syria proper.

In 1936 France signed Treaties of Friendship and Alliance with Syria and Lebanon, granting these territories greater autonomy. But their colonial status was far from removed, since France was allowed special trading privileges and retained military control over the whole of Syria.

Turn now to Iraq and observe how the British helped the people establish a government by their own "initiative and free choice."

Even before the war the British had valuable oil, shipping, and strategic interests in Iraq, or Mesopotamia, as it was then known. During the war British and Indian troops used it as their base of operations against the Turks. After the war, British occupation forces took charge of Iraq. The Iraqis naturally resented this, since they had naively trusted the Anglo-French promises of independence.

When strong protests failed to dislodge the British forces, disturbances piled up into a full-fledged rebellion. It grew to such serious proportions that the British were obliged to add renewed assurances of independence to the use of military power. Sir Percy Cox, who had previously served as a British agent in that region, was sent by the British government to conciliate the Iraqis.

Cox appointed an Arab Cabinet, with a British adviser lurking behind each minister. But even some of these hand-picked Arab ministers failed to be quite subservient enough. Thereupon the British arrested and exiled the leading minister, Sayyid Talib Shah, and looked for an eligible monarch—the British having an unshakable belief that all Orientals adore royalty. Their choice was none other than Feisal, who was unemployed

at the time, having been thrown out of Syria by the French.

In the summer of 1921, Feisal was ceremoniously presented to the Iraqis as their future king. For the correct democratic touch, a plebiscite was held and, sure enough, with proper guidance from the British army of occupation, 96 per cent of the electorate voted for Feisal as their ruler. He became king in August, 1921. Sir Percy Cox remained as High Commissioner.

Unfortunately, the Iraqis failed to appreciate Feisal, though it had been officially declared that 96 per cent of them favored the King (much as after the second world war over 70 per cent of the Greek electorate was declared to have voted for the return of King George to Greece). Agitation and demonstrations of protest took an ominous turn during the following twelve months.

The exasperated Sir Percy Cox decided to peel off the velvet gloves. He put an end to the power of the King together with that of the ministers and the council, and assumed dictatorial powers. Nationalist political parties were dissolved, their leaders were exiled, and the Nationalist press was gagged. The Royal Air Force was let loose to restore order.

Even these rigorous measures failed to establish order. It was necessary to recall the King and the ministers to function again. Protestations of friendship were again made by the British government, which even promised to sponsor Iraq for membership in the League of Nations—if only Iraq would sign a "Treaty of Alliance" with Britain.

On October 10, 1922, the willing and amenable Feisal signed the treaty, which contained provisions similar to that of a mandate. Britain guaranteed to provide Iraq with military and financial "aid," and Iraq agreed "to be guided by the advice" of the British High Commissioner on "all important matters affecting the international and financial obligations and interests of His Britannic Majesty." The Iraq government obligingly promised to run the administration with the help of British officials, whose salaries were also fixed by the terms of

the treaty. But the Iraqis refused to be taken in by this transparent dodge. Protests continued and the Nationalist leaders successfully boycotted the proposed elections for a Constituent Assembly.

In 1923 the British government made a few changes in the treaty in favor of Iraq. The twenty-year term was reduced to four. Simultaneously, the strength of the Nationalists was diminished by sending into exile some of the leading agitators. Early in 1924 the elections to the Constituent Assembly were held. Even this Assembly refused to accept the treaty with Britain, though strong pressure was brought to bear upon it. The treaty was eventually ratified, but only by a little over a third of the members, while a large number of the deputies remained away from the session.

Iraq was finally given a constitution on paper, real power remaining in the hands of the British officials behind the throne. In 1925 Iraq laid claim to oil-rich Mosul, then considered a part of Turkey. The League of Nations, to which the matter was referred, declared in favor of Iraq. Thus, in much the same manner that the Sudan was taken over in the name of Egypt, the British secured Mosul in the name of their puppet government of Iraq, which in turn promptly awarded a seventy-five-year concession to the British-controlled Turkish Petroleum Co. to exploit the oil resources of Mosul. Immediately the British hiked up the treaty terms with Iraq to twenty-five years.

In June, 1930, Britain signed yet another treaty with Iraq. After the customary professions of Iraq's independence, Britain extracted from Iraq the rights to military and air bases, and to the stationing of troops, especially in Mosul. In addition, the government of Iraq agreed to employ British instructors for the Iraqi Army and British officers as advisers, to buy arms and ammunition from British firms, and to open up the country to the British armed forces in case Britain was involved in a war. The terms of the treaty were again made for twenty-five years. Iraq thus became a "veiled protectorate" of Britain.

Meanwhile there were sporadic outbursts against this state

of affairs in different parts of the country. The strongly nationalistic Kurds, especially, continued their bitter opposition to the double exploitation by Britain and the feudalistic puppet government of Iraq. This was embarrassing to the British, for they were about to sponsor "independent" Iraq for membership in the League of Nations. In order to be able to present Iraq to the League as a peaceful and well-ordered country, the Royal Air Force was sent to the Kurdish areas to pacify the people. After some tragic experiences the Kurds learned to recognize the sound of approaching planes and hid themselves until the planes had disappeared. The Royal Air Force then began dropping time bombs that exploded after the villagers, feeling themselves safe when the planes disappeared, came out of hiding.

An eminent British officer gave a brief glimpse of the effective work of the British Air Force. In the course of the anniversary lecture to the Royal Asian Society in London on June 8, 1932, Lt.-Col. Sir Arnold Wilson referred to "the pertinacity with which (notwithstanding declarations at Geneva) the R.A.F. has been bombing the Kurdish population for the last ten years, and in particular the last six months. Devastated villages, slaughtered cattle, maimed women and children bear witness to the spread, in the words of the special correspondent to *The Times*, of a uniform pattern of civilization."

Peace and order were at last restored. True to her promise, Britain sponsored Iraq's membership in the League of Nations. A jest of that time was that Iraq was "bombed" into the League.

In Palestine, Britain established a purely colonial government, with the British High Commissioner wielding dictatorial powers. For centuries a Jewish minority had lived in Palestine in perfect harmony with the Arabs. With the setting up of the British government, Arabs and Jews came into conflict with one another. Britain sided with one or the other, as the occasion demanded, keeping the conflict going so that she could remain as umpire. Increasingly, however, as Pierre van Paassen has

documented in *The Forgotten Ally*, Britain supported the feudalistic Arab chieftains in preference to the European Jews who were bringing more modern ideas and technology into Palestine.

Across the river Jordan from Palestine, lies the tiny emirate of Transjordan, which the British lopped off from Syria and handed over to Abdullah, brother of Feisal. In 1929 the British government went through the motions of signing an "agreement" with Abdullah. The Transjordanians opposed the agreement, but popular resentment was crushed by the customary methods of suppressing the press and deporting the popular leaders. Supreme power rested with the Colonial Office in London and was exercised by the High Commissioner of Palestine, under whose jurisdiction Transjordan was placed.

Three former German colonies in Africa were split into six parts, to be shared by Britain, France, and Belgium. Togoland and Cameroon were partitioned into British and French sections, and German East Africa became the British Tanganyika Territory and the Belgian Ruanda-Urundi. These were known as the "B" mandates.

As "C" mandates, the Pacific islands of the Marshalls, Carolines, and Marianas went to Japan, New Guinea to Australia, Western Samoa to New Zealand, and Nauru to the British Empire. Southwest Africa was taken over by the Union of South Africa.

This is, briefly, the pattern of imperialist expansion. To be sure, there were some other variations; but they were unimportant, and they never influenced the main lines of colonial acquisition. The minute British protectorate of Sarawak, for example, was presented as a reward to Sir James Brooke by the Sultan of Brunei for services rendered. It has since been donated to the British Empire by the English rajah. And the British colony of Pitcairn Island was originally settled by the mutineers from *H.M.S. Bounty*.

In general, imperialist powers reduced hundreds of millions

of people to colonial or semi-colonial status, often by military conquest, sometimes by fomenting internal dissensions among the victims, and occasionally by purchase. The most modern method has been economic penetration backed by threatened or actual military intervention.

Imperialist expansion did not mark time between the world wars. Even after the loot from the first world war was divided among the victors, Japan continued her march of aggression in China and Italy bombed Ethiopia into submission. Since Japan and Italy were among the losing powers after the second world war, it is fairly certain that their previous colonies will not be restored to them. In fact, the Stars and Stripes are already flying over Japan's former mandates. In any case, we shall take leave of the Japanese, Italian, and German empires from this point on, since conclusions reached from a knowledge of the other empires would be equally applicable to them.

When the second world war started, the score of the present colony-owning countries stood as follows:

Britain had acquired an empire more than  $9\frac{1}{2}$  million square miles in area, with a population of nearly 450 million (not including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Eire, but including the Union of South Africa, where the majority have colonial status).

France had acquired an empire more than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  million square miles in area, with a population of over 71 million.

The Netherlands had acquired an empire nearly 800 thousand square miles in area, with a population of over 70 million.

The United States had acquired an empire more than 700 thousand square miles in area, with a population of over 14 million (including Alaska and the Philippines).

Belgium had acquired an empire more than 900 thousand square miles in area, with a population of over 10 million.

Portugal had acquired an empire more than 800 thousand square miles in area, with a population of over 10 million.

Spain was a bad last with an empire more than 100 thousand square miles in area, with a population of over 900 thousand.



The above list includes mandates, protectorates, and such nominally independent countries as Egypt and Iraq. It does not include countries that are economically dominated by imperialist powers though they maintain all the outward trappings of independence, such as many of the South American states.

One point is worth noting here. British Empire spokesmen resent the fact that attack on imperialism often centers on Britain. Though such an attack would be technically incorrect, since Britain is not the only imperialist country in the world, there is, nevertheless, some justification behind it. The British Empire is not only by far the largest single empire in the world; it covers so many parts of the world that, it is said, the sun never sets on it. In Europe, Britain owns Gibraltar and Malta; in Asia, Aden and other neighboring possessions, British Borneo, Ceylon, Cyprus, Hongkong, India, Burma, the Straits Settlements, the Federated and Unfederated Malay States, Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq; in Africa, British East Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar, Mauritius, Nyasaland, St. Helena, Ascension Island, Tristan Da Cunha, Seychelles, Somaliland, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Swaziland, Nigeria, Gambia, Gold Coast, Ashanti, the Northern Territories, Sierra Leone, the Protectorate adjoining Sierra Leone, Tanganyika, British Togoland and Cameroons, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Egypt; in the Americas, Bermuda, Falkland Islands, British Guiana, British Honduras, Newfoundland and Labrador, Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Leeward Islands, Windward Islands, and Trinidad; in Australasia and Oceania, Fiji, Tonga, Pitcairn, Gilbert, Ellice and other small islands, and New Hebrides; and the territories of Papua, New Guinea, Western Samoa, Nauru, and Southwest Africa, held in the name of the dominions of Australia, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa.

Take them altogether, add the dominions themselves, and there is the British Empire, literally straddling the globe. To

hang onto this farflung empire, Britain has to protect the Empire Life Line, which means that she has to have either "friendly" governments all along this line, or subservient governments balancing potential rivals. This is the reason for Britain's grave solicitude for such countries as Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece.

And this is by no means the whole story. As the strongest imperialist power, Britain is obliged to aid other imperialist powers when they are faced with colonial rebellion, because the break-up of even the smallest empire would weaken the other empires—unless, of course, the break-up led not to freedom for the rebellious colonies but to a redistribution of these colonies. For instance, Portugal has long been under the thumb of Britain, so the security of the Portuguese Empire becomes a British concern. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that Britain is picked as the champion among all the imperialist powers.

### ❀ Chapter III ❀

## WHAT ARE COLONIES WORTH?

**F**OR THE LITTLE kingdom of Holland, the possession of Indonesia has been unbelievably profitable.

Until the middle of the seventeenth century, Dutch traders were primarily concerned with the spices of the islands. Secured sometimes by force and sometimes by exchange for cheap trinkets, the spices fetched a fabulous price in Europe. Gradually the astute Dutch traders realized that the fertile soil of Java and Sumatra held greater potential riches for them. The emphasis then shifted from concentration on the spice trade to development of large plantations growing such highly marketable products as coffee, tea, indigo, pepper, sugar and, later on, rubber, palm oil, and cinchona.

Concentrated exploitation of Indonesia by the Dutch began in the nineteenth century, when the colony was restored to the Netherlands government after the Napoleonic wars. By 1830, Holland was in serious financial difficulties. The costs of the Belgian Revolution and the consolidation of Dutch power over Indonesia were a heavy drain on the government treasury. At this critical period Indonesia saved Holland from bankruptcy.

In 1830, Count Van den Bosch, Governor-General of Indonesia, introduced the notorious "Culture System" in Java, by which the serfdom of feudal Europe was imposed on the Javanese peasants. Just as, on the medieval manor, the serf had to work a certain number of days per year for his lord, so also the Dutch government compelled the Javanese to set aside one-fifth of their land and cultivate it for the benefit of Holland's State Treasury. The government dictated what crop was to

be cultivated, appropriated the produce without compensation, and paid nothing either for the land or the peasants' labor.

Upon discovering the pay dirt they had struck, the Dutch soon forgot the original limits on the peasants' time and land. Expropriation of land and forced labor were increased without the slightest regard to even the minimum crops needed for the local food supply. As a result, between 1830 and 1877, while famines were frequent in Indonesia, at least 334 million dollars \* flowed from Java to Holland. This sum does not include the fortunes made by corrupt officials through the opportunities for graft the system offered them.

When some officials in Holland criticized the Culture System, the government made vague promises to eliminate the worst abuses; but a memorandum of 1851 clearly affirmed Holland's policy by declaring that "conquered territory shall continue to furnish the Netherlands the material advantages which were the object of the conquest."<sup>60</sup>

One of the honest officials, Edouard Douwes Dekker, using the pen name of Multatuli, exposed the horrors of the system in his celebrated book, *Max Havelaar*, known in Holland as the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of Indonesia. Published in 1860, the book created a sensation in the Netherlands. By the Agrarian Law of 1870, some relief was provided for the Javanese farmers; but it was the demand of the Dutch businessmen for greater freedom for private enterprise in Indonesia that finally resulted in the abolition of the Culture System. By 1890, it had almost disappeared, although the compulsory cultivation of coffee was continued until 1915. In place of the Culture System, the government substituted a poll tax on the people, as the British did in Africa. To pay the poll tax the poor Indonesians were forced to earn money as underpaid laborers on Dutch-owned plantations.

Large-scale foreign capital investment in Indonesia began with the twentieth century. By 1941 this investment totaled

\* Computed on the basis of the par value of 1 florin = 40 cents.

about two billion dollars, of which the Dutch held over three-fourths. The British share was about 14 per cent, the Americans had 5 per cent, the French 3 per cent, and the Japanese, Germans, Italians, and Belgians had about 1 per cent each.

About half of this investment was in plantation agriculture, the largest part being in sugar, held primarily by the Dutch. Next in importance came rubber, where non-Dutch capital was predominant, Holland's share being about 45 per cent. Then came, in diminishing order of importance, tea, coffee, tobacco, oil palms, cinchona, and cocoanuts.

Of the other half of foreign investment, the lion's share went to the petroleum industry. The Standard-Vacuum Oil Company, a subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey and Socony Vacuum, controlled more than a third of the oil interests in Indonesia, the balance being owned by Dutch and British companies, chiefly the Royal Dutch Shell.

Next to petroleum, tin ranked highest in the mineral exports of Indonesia. Most of the mines were owned and operated by the government, and the government also had a controlling interest (62.5 per cent) in the privately owned Billiton Company.

In quinine, pepper, and kapok fiber, Indonesia had a virtual monopoly. Before the second world war, she supplied over 90 per cent of the world's quinine, 85 per cent of the pepper, and 75 per cent of the kapok. She also supplied 37 per cent of the world's rubber, 28 per cent of the cocoanut products, 25 per cent of the agave and sisal fiber, 20 per cent of the tin, 18 per cent of the tea, 6 per cent of the coffee, 5 per cent of the sugar, 3 per cent of the petroleum products, and moderate quantities of gold and silver.

Of the agricultural exports 69.3 per cent was produced on exclusively Dutch-owned farms, only 30.7 per cent on farms owned by Indonesians. In 1938 Dutch plantations supplied 99.4 per cent of the exported sugar and 81.9 per cent of the tea. Although Indonesians grew most of the kapok, copra, and rubber, they were effectively under the thumb of the foreign trading and transportation monopolies that dictated the prices

to the farmers. Railroads were owned by the government, and the extremely profitable inter-island trade was a virtual monopoly of the Dutch K.P.M. Shipping Company.

To put it very simply, the Netherlands' prosperity was based on monopoly of the resources of Indonesia. Though in course of time she was forced to open the door to other investors—especially to Britain, who somehow managed to get her finger in every pie—it was opened only a crack. Concessions, leases, licenses, and subsidies were reserved chiefly for the Dutch companies.

In round sum, the Netherlands made about 150 million dollars a year out of Indonesia before the Japanese walked in. This was no trifling sum for a country of only 9 million people. No wonder the Dutch historian, A. Cabaton, wrote that "In the possession of her splendid Indian Empire, she (Holland) feels on a level with more powerful States; without it she would understand the bitterness of that saying of Leopold II of Belgium: 'It is such an infirmity for a country to be small!' This is why the Low Countries . . . would shed the blood of their last soldier rather than abandon the Indies." <sup>61</sup>

In the course of the last two hundred years or so, India has contributed immeasurably to Britain's prosperity, power and prestige. From the middle of the eighteenth century to the present day an incalculable amount of wealth has flowed from India to Britain, millions of Indians have died far from home in the name of the British Empire, and the possession of the largest single colony in the world, so strategically located, has enabled Britain to be recognized as a first-rate world power.

When the East India Company began their trade in Indian goods, Britain produced nothing that could be offered the Indians in exchange. British merchants were obliged to pay the Indian manufacturers in gold or silver. It was painful to these merchants to take gold and silver out of their country, for the accumulation of these precious metals was the hallmark of wealth. Hence, from the very beginning the East India Com-

pany hunted for some other means of obtaining the money to pay for Indian goods.

The first source the Company tapped was the slave trade, for which very little capital was required. Whatever capital was expended never left the British Isles, since it was spent in buying and outfitting the boats. Slaves were secured by the judicious use of gin or by force. They were sold to the planters in the West Indies and the Spaniards in South America to work in the plantations and silver mines. A portion of the silver obtained by the sale of Negro slaves went to pay for Indian manufactures. "The English trade with India was really a chase to find something that India would be willing to take," writes L. C. A. Knowles, in his *Economic Development of the Overseas Empire*, "and the silver obtained by the sale of the slaves in the West Indies and Spanish America was all-important in this connection."<sup>62</sup>

Soon after the conquest of Bengal in 1757, the Company found almost limitless ways of making money. The income from Bengal—raised by means of greatly increased taxes on land, bribery, extortion, and sheer plunder—supplied more than the capital necessary for trade. "These glorious successes have brought near three millions of money to the nation," exultantly wrote T. L. Scafton, a member of the Company's Council, in 1763, "for, properly speaking, almost the whole of the immense sums received from the Soubah (Bengal) finally centers in England. So great a portion of it fell into the Company's hands . . . that they have been enabled to carry on the whole trade of India (China excepted) for three years together, without sending one ounce of bullion." The export-import figures for the three years 1766–68 indicate how the merchants of the East India Company were drawing wealth out of India without sending much in return: exports from India amounted to £6,311,250, while imports into India amounted to only £624,375.

On September 30, 1765, Robert Clive wrote from India to the Directors of the East India Company that the revenue from

Bengal "will, as near as I can judge, not fall far short for the ensuing year of 250 lakhs of Sicca Rupees," and, after paying all expenses, "there will be remaining a clear gain to the Company of 122 lakhs of Sicca Rupees, or £1,650,000 sterling."

In 1770 there was a severe famine in Bengal. All available foodstuff was bought up by the Company's servants, who refused to sell it except at exorbitant prices. Nearly ten million people—one-third of the population—perished as a result. Yet the land revenue was rigorously collected; it even showed an increase, for ten per cent was added to the taxes to make up the loss inflicted by the dead. "Notwithstanding the loss of at least one-third of the inhabitants of the province, and the consequent decrease of the cultivation," reported Warren Hastings from Calcutta on November 3, 1772, "the net collections of the year 1771 exceeded even those of 1768 . . . owing to its being violently kept up to its former standard."

A glance at the revenue figures would give an idea of the scale of the Company's profits. In 1764–65 the land revenue of Bengal was £817,000; in 1765–66 it rose to £1,470,000; in 1771–72, it climbed to £2,341,000; in 1775–76 to £2,818,000; and in 1793 it reached the figure of £3,400,000. In the Fourth Report of the House of Commons, 1773, the following figures were given about the revenues and expenses of Bengal for the six years ending 1770–71: The total net revenue was £13,066,761; the total expenditure was £9,027,609; and "clear gain," sent to England, amounted to £4,037,152, or nearly one-third of the total.

But this was only one way of making money; there were many others. The Company increased its profits by dictating to the Indian spinners and weavers the price they were to receive for their goods. Having political power over the Indian manufacturer, the Company meted out brutal punishment to the Indians who refused to sell at the dictated low price. More than that, in their greed, backed by military power, the East India Company's servants often expropriated by force the products of the Indian manufacturer without any compensa-



tion whatsoever. The following is one of many documents of the period testifying to this practice.

"It may with truth be now said," wrote William Bolts in 1772 in his *Considerations on Indian Affairs*, "that the whole inland trade of the country, as at present conducted, . . . has been one continued scene of oppression . . . every article being produced being made a monopoly; in which the English, with their Banyans and black Gomastahs, arbitrarily decide what quantities of goods each manufacturer shall deliver, and the prices he shall receive for them. . . . The assent of the poor weaver is in general not deemed necessary. . . . The roguery practiced in this department is beyond imagination; but all terminates in the defrauding of the poor weaver; for the prices which the Company's Gomastahs, and in confederacy with them the Jachendars (examiners of fabrics) fix upon the goods, are in all places at best 15 per cent, and in some even 40 per cent less than the goods so manufactured would sell in the public bazaar or market upon free sale. . . . Weavers, also, upon their inability to perform such agreements as have been forced upon them . . . have had their goods seized and sold on the spot to make good the deficiency. . . ."

When other territories were added to the Company's possessions, a similar method was followed. Land was always assessed upward. In Bombay province, after British conquest, the land revenue increased from £868,047 in 1817-18 to £1,818,314 in 1820-21, and continued rising. The land revenue of Punjab was £820,000 in 1847-48; in 1849, after British conquest, it was increased to £1,060,989 in three years.

Besides the vast gains of the East India Company, its individual employees had a free hand to line their pockets with gold. The Company's servants in India monopolized the internal trade of the country in consumer goods, bought them from their producers at ridiculously low prices or merely confiscated them, and sold them at the highest price obtainable, often forcing them on unwilling buyers and extracting the price by violent means. Such everyday necessities and minor

luxuries as salt, clarified butter, rice, sugar, straw, bamboo, fish, tobacco, ginger, and betel-nut were cornered by these employees under the military protection of the Company. Clive, the conqueror of Bengal, stated that fortunes of £100,000 were made in two years. He himself went home with more than a quarter of a million pounds, in addition to an estate bringing in £27,000 a year.

Territorial conquest opened up many other illicit ways of making money, which in turn led to more conquests. Bengal came to be looked upon in Britain as an inexhaustible bowl of riches. Hands were stretched out from every strata of English society, not excluding the royal family, for the easy pickings. Even the government of England shared directly in it for six years to the tune of £400,000 annually. The tenuous margin between trade and plunder reached the vanishing point.

The flood of wealth that poured into Britain from India in the last half of the eighteenth century was to a great extent responsible for the success of the Industrial Revolution. Inventions similar to those with which the Industrial Revolution is associated, existed years before James Watt. Kay had patented the fly-shuttle in 1733 and Wyatt his roller-spinning machine, worked by water-power, in 1738. But mass production, which such inventions made possible, required large capital outlay. It was not until after the conquest of Bengal that capital accumulation increased rapidly in Britain.

"The influx of the Indian treasure," writes Brooks Adams, "by adding considerably to the nation's cash capital, not only increased its stock of energy, but added much to its flexibility and the rapidity of its movement. Very soon after Plassey, the Bengal plunder began to arrive in London, and the effect appears to have been instantaneous; for all the authorities agree that the 'industrial revolution,' the event which has divided the nineteenth century from all antecedent time, began with the year 1760. Prior to 1760, according to Baines, the machinery used for spinning cotton in Lancashire was almost as simple as in India; while about 1750 the English iron industry was in

full decline because of the destruction of the forests for fuel. At that time four-fifths of the iron used in the kingdom came from Sweden."

Emphasizing the importance of the conquest of Bengal, Brooks Adams continues:

Plassey was fought in 1757, and probably nothing has ever equalled the rapidity of the change which followed. In 1760 the flying shuttle appeared, and coal began to replace wood in smelting. In 1764 Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny, in 1776 Crompton contrived the mule, in 1785 Cartwright patented the power loom, and, chief of all, in 1768 Watt matured the steam engine, the most perfect of all vents of centralising energy. But, though these machines served as outlets for the accelerating movement of the time, they did not cause that acceleration. In themselves inventions are passive, many of the most important having lain dormant for centuries, waiting for a sufficient store of force to have accumulated to set them working. That store must always take the shape of money, and money not hoarded, but in motion. Before the influx of the Indian treasure, and the expansion of credit which followed, no force sufficient for this purpose existed; and had Watt lived fifty years earlier, he and his invention must have perished together. Possibly since the world began, no investment has ever yielded the profit reaped from the Indian plunder, because for nearly fifty years Great Britain stood without a competitor. From 1694 to Plassey (1757) the growth had been relatively slow. Between 1760 and 1815 the growth was very rapid and prodigious.<sup>63</sup>

Thus the wealth drained from India was a major contributing factor in the industrialization of England; and, with the Industrial Revolution, a new phase in the exploitation of India by Britain began.

The rising industrialists of Britain first compelled their government to impose a heavy duty on imported Indian goods. As they prospered and expanded their production, they began to look upon India as a ready-made market for their products, and as a source for the raw materials increasingly in demand. Thomas Bazley, President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, declared before the 1840 Parliamentary

Committee: "In India there is an immense extent of territory, and the population of it would consume British manufactures to a most enormous extent. The whole question with respect to our Indian trade is whether they can pay us, by the products of their soil, for what we are prepared to send out as manufactures."

Bazley spoke the thoughts of other British industrialists. Even earlier than this Englishmen had set up large plantations in India, where Indians worked under conditions of virtual slavery. In fact, planters experienced in handling slaves in America and the West Indies rushed to India, and took with them their own concepts and brutal practices. Before the Indigo Commission of 1860, set up as a result of violent outbreaks in the plantations, witnesses testified how the planters treated the workers as slaves, cheated them in the measure of the land and of the indigo plants, put them in stocks, flogged and otherwise oppressed them. The celebrated Indian dramatist Dinabandhu Mitra, exposed the condition of the indigo workers in a brilliant play, *Nil Darpan (The Mirror of Indigo)*, much as Multatuli had done about the Indonesian workers in *Max Havelaar*. Mitra's play, however, was proscribed by the British government, and the Rev. James Long, a missionary, was fined and imprisoned by the High Court of Calcutta for translating the play into English.

As modern industries blossomed in Britain, political power passed into their control, and the strength of the East India Company merchants declined. In 1813, the monopoly of the Company's India trade was ended by Parliamentary decree.

From that time India began to export more and more raw material and to import increasing quantities of manufactured goods from Britain. Between 1814 and 1844 the number of Indian cotton piece-goods imported into Britain fell from 1,250,000 pieces to 63,000 pieces. During the same period British cotton manufactures exported to India rose from less than 1 million yards to over 51 million yards. India had for centuries exported cotton goods to the whole world; her fine

fabrics were used four thousand years ago by Egyptians to wrap their mummies; but by 1850 she was importing one-fourth of all British cotton exports. Other British products—silks, woolens, ironwork, pottery, glass, and paper—poured into India in increasing quantities.

India began shipping out vast quantities of food grains, such as rice and wheat. The value of food grain export rose from £858,000 in 1849 to £3.8 million by 1858, £7.9 million by 1877, £9.3 million by 1901, and £19.3 million in 1914. To make the picture complete, it should be stated that, parallel to the increase in grain shipment from India, there was a tragic increase in deaths from famine. During the second half of the nineteenth century, export of food grain multiplied about eleven times, while deaths from famine multiplied nearly twenty times.

Effective exploitation of India by an industrialized Britain and maintenance of military control naturally called for improved means of transportation and communication. To transport raw materials from their sources to the nearest ports, railroads were necessary. This was in the mind of Lord Dalhousie when he painted this glowing future in his minute on Railways in 1853: "The commercial and social advantages which India would derive from their establishment are, I truly believe, beyond all present calculation . . . England is calling aloud for cotton which India does already produce in some degree, and would produce sufficient in quality, and plentiful in quantity, if only there were provided the fitting means of conveyance for it from distant plains to the several ports adopted for its shipment. . . . New markets are opening to us on this side of the globe under circumstances which defy the foresight of the wisest to estimate their probable value or calculate their future extent."

Enormous profits were made by the manufacturers and contractors from building the railways in India, as was the case in Egypt a decade later. The government guaranteed the British investors a minimum interest of 5 per cent on the revenues of India. There was a stampede of investors; nobody

bothered about the cost, and graft and inefficiency were unbelievable. At the 1872 Parliamentary inquiry, William N. Massey, Finance Minister of India, testified that the railways at the beginning cost about £30,000 a mile. "The contractors had no motive for economy," declared the same authority. "All the money came from the English capitalist, and so long as he was guaranteed five per cent on the revenues of India, it was immaterial to him whether the funds that he lent were thrown into the Hooghly or converted into bricks and mortar. . . . It seems to me that they are the most extravagant works that were ever undertaken." By the end of the nineteenth century, as was to be expected, the railroads piled up a deficit of £40 million, which the Indian taxpayer had to shoulder. After the turn of the century a profit was squeezed out of the railways; at the time of the second world war India was sending approximately £10 million to Britain for the railway debt.

Large-scale British capital investment in India began in the twentieth century, and took a sharp rise following the first world war. According to the London *Economist* of February 20, 1909, British capital invested in India by that time amounted to £475 million. By 1914 it reached £500 million. In 1929 it had risen to £700 million. By the time the second world war came along, it stood at one billion pounds, or one-quarter of the total British foreign investments throughout the world. Some of these investments were fabulously profitable. Coal mines brought a return of 160 per cent—while paying a daily wage of 16 cents. The dividends from one of these mines averaged over 80 per cent annually throughout the period 1901–29. British-owned jute mills paid as much as 100 per cent, and seldom less than 20 per cent. All this was possible because the investors could use British political and military control of India to keep labor cheap and abundant. Before 1940, it was estimated, at least 750 million dollars were annually transferred from India to Britain in one form or another.

India has been profitable to Britain in many other ways.

The cost of conquering India was chalked up against the Indians. India had to pay for the various wars fought by the British inside her boundaries and many that were fought outside her boundaries. "The burdens that it was found convenient to charge to India seem preposterous," writes L. H. Jenks. "The costs of the Mutiny, the price of the transfer of the Company's rights to the Crown, the expenses of simultaneous wars in China and Abyssinia, every governmental item in London that remotely related to India down to the fees of the charwomen in the India Office and the expenses of ships that sailed but did not participate in hostilities and the cost of Indian regiments for six months' training at home before they sailed—all were charged to the account of the unrepresented ryot [peasant]. The Sultan of Turkey visited London in 1868 in state, and his official ball was arranged for at the India Office and the bill charged to India. A lunatic asylum in Ealing, gifts to members of a Zanzibar mission, the consular and diplomatic establishments of Great Britain in China and in Persia, part of the permanent expenses of the Mediterranean fleet and the entire cost of a line of telegraph from England to India had been charged before 1870 to the Indian Treasury."<sup>64</sup>

Apart from all this, Indian exchange has been manipulated to serve British interests. In the 1920's, for example, the exchange value of the rupee—the standard Indian silver coin—was brought down from 2 shillings to 1 shilling 4 pence, ruining the Indian importers.

India has been of immense strategic value as a source of troops, supplies and funds, and the base of operations for the control of Suez, the Persian Gulf, the Middle Eastern empire, routes to the Far East, and Australia. In the first world war 800,000 Indian soldiers and 400,000 Indian laborers went overseas to make the world safe for imperialism. Besides sharing a great part of the war's burden, Indians were also induced in 1914-18 to make a "gift" of £100 million to Britain.

The power and prestige Britain has derived from her possession of India can hardly be minimized. Lord Curzon frankly

admitted it at the turn of the century. Lord Rothermere pointed out in the *Daily Mail* of May 16, 1930 that "many authorities estimate that the proportion of the vital trading, banking, and shipping business of Britain directly dependent upon our connection with India is 20% . . . India is the lynch-pin of the British Empire. If we lose India the Empire must collapse—first, economically then politically." Even the liberal *Manchester Guardian* admitted editorially on January 3, 1940 that "there are two chief reasons why a self-regarding England may hesitate to relax her control over India. The first is that her influence in the past depended partly upon her power to summon troops and to draw resources from India in time of need. This power will vanish when India has Dominion Status. The second is that Great Britain finds in India her best market, and that she has one thousand million pounds of capital invested there."

Beginning with the conquest of Saigon in 1859, it took France some thirty years to complete the piecemeal conquest of Indo-China. By the turn of the century, the colony had become a paying concern, and, after 1914, returns from French investment in Indo-China increased rapidly.

Under French domination, Indo-China was developed as an exporter of minerals and agricultural products. French capital investment was largely concentrated on the production of rice, maize, rubber, coal, and tin.

The Chinese have described Indo-China as a pole balanced by two baskets of rice: the pole being the Annamite mountain range which parallels the coast, and the rice baskets being the two great deltas of the Mekong and the Red Rivers. Four-fifths of the colony's cultivated land was planted to rice. A major portion of the land was handed over to French concessionaires for nominal sums; another large portion was allowed "loyal" Indo-Chinese landowners; and a small fraction—less than 20 per cent—was parceled out to the ordinary peasants. In 1939, of the total yield of 7,150,000 tons of rice, nearly 2 million tons



were exported, more than 1 million tons going to France and the balance to Japan. The French netted over 1 billion francs from the export.

After the first world war French capitalists invested heavily in rubber plantations in Indo-China, to cash in on the rubber boom sweeping the industrial world. Forced labor was drafted to build roads and railways into the interior, and to clear the forests. The area under cultivation of rubber-bearing plants increased from 23,000 hectares in 1923 to 127,000 hectares in 1938. Shipments of 68,880 metric tons of rubber in 1939 were valued at 956 million francs. In 1940, rubber shipments declined in volume to 64,900 tons, but increased in value to 1.1 billion francs, or 27 per cent of the total export trade of Indo-China. Although far behind Malay and Indonesia, Indo-China ranked third among the rubber exporting countries of the world, supplying about 6 per cent of the total world production, and all of France's own rubber requirements.

Coal mines in Indo-China were almost exclusively in the hands of the French capitalists. The output of the Hongay mines in Tonkin increased from 278,000 tons in 1901 to 2,600,000 tons in 1939, of which half was exported to France and most of the other half to Japan. Net profits rose from 2,500,000 francs in 1913 to 136,200,000 francs in 1925, and by the 1930's shares of the Hongay mines were quoted at a hundred times their face value.

Although Upper Tonkin and Upper Laos were known to hold rich deposits of tin, zinc, tungsten, iron ore, and manganese, only the surface had been scratched by 1940. Nevertheless, the value of their output shot up from 30 million francs in 1914 to 260 million francs in 1938.

The state had a monopoly on salt, on distillation of alcohol from rice, and on opium. As in India, so also in Indo-China, the people had to pay a tax on salt. In 1933 the government technically removed the restriction on private manufacture of alcohol, but the government-controlled Société des Distilleries de l'Indochine continued to dominate the industry. It was re-

ported in *L'Humanité* that Governor-General Albert Sarraut once sent out a circular to all Residents Superior with a "list of retail shops which are to be opened in the enumerated villages, most of which have so far been entirely deprived of spirits and opium." In 1932, distilleries in Indo-China reported a profit of 21 million francs. The state opium monopoly had an annual income of nearly 200 million francs.

From her mineral resources and agricultural wealth, Indo-China in 1936 yielded the French treasury over 40 million francs, besides another 1½ billion francs to the treasury of the "mother country" as reimbursement of expenditures on police, prisons and courts, payments on capital invested by the state, and commercial profits.

Since her conquest, Africa has been systematically exploited. The wealth that has been drained out of Africa in terms of diamonds and gold is legendary, and needs no elaboration.

The customary process of exploitation, with rare exceptions, has been to secure monopoly control over the mineral resources; the alienation of tribal and communal land, which was then turned over in large parcels to white settlers; and the use of governmental power to force the dispossessed Africans to labor in mines and plantations for infinitesimal wages.

Profits from the mineral resources could not be anything but highly gratifying to the conquerors. For example, in 1937, the Gold Coast mineral exports were valued at £5,588,000, out of which £3 million went in profits to the shareholders. In the same year the output of copper in Northern Rhodesia was valued at £12 million, of which £5 million went as dividends to the shareholders abroad. It has been estimated that for every £100 realized from mineral resources, £92 have been taken out of the country and only £8 left behind.

The expropriation of land belonging to the African people took on the character of plain robbery and in one form or another continues to this day. In Southern Rhodesia in the 1920's, while the European settlers already possessed 10,000

acres per person—man, woman and child—it was proposed to take away still more land from the Africans. Nearly half the acreage of this territory has already been alienated from their rightful owners, who now occupy less than 22 million of the total of 96,200,100 acres. In Northern Rhodesia, less than 11,000 Europeans own 8,794,775 acres, while thirteen hundred times as many Africans hold less than ten times as much land. In Southwest Africa 62,930,000 acres, nearly a third of the territory, has been taken away from the original owners. In Kenya, as early as 1898, all the land was declared forfeit. The most valuable land was given or sold to European planters, and the Africans were herded into small reserves with inferior soil. In French Equatorial Africa, one-third of the total land has been handed over to forty French companies, and another third has been appropriated by the state. The story of robbing the African of his land has been the same in other parts of Africa.

Little Belgium has been able to hold her own in Africa, thanks to shrewd Leopold II. In July, 1885, Leopold renamed his possession, ironically enough, the Congo Free State. The first taste of freedom the Congo people had was in the form of a state decree that all "vacant lands" belonged to the state. This meant that all forests and all lands except the patches actually cultivated by the people became a state monopoly. Leopold granted "concessions" over large blocks of state land to private corporations, usually reserving half the shares for himself. For his personal use he maintained an area of 112,000 square miles of choicest rubber forests.

Rubber vines grew wild in abundance in the Congo forests. The Africans were forced to collect the rubber sap for the corporations and quotas were imposed on the villages. Soldiers held women as hostages and thousands of Africans were executed to compel the villagers to deliver their quota of rubber. The results were highly satisfactory—for Leopold and the shareholders of the corporations. One of these corporations made a net profit of more than 3 million dollars on a paid-up

capital of about 45 thousand dollars. Annual dividends averaged over ten times the original value of the shares, and the market value of the shares climbed to dizzy heights. Leopold made a fortune of 20 million dollars.

The merciless exploitation of the Congo did not end when Leopold sold it to the Belgian government for a fat sum. Previous concessionaires retained their holdings. The *Compagnie du Congo pour le Commerce et l'Industrie* owns over 1 million hectares of land, and the *Comité Spécial du Katanga* owns much of the richest mining land and controls more than 45 million hectares. In 1940, Belgian Congo was a vastly profitable venture, producing half the world's output of diamonds, mainly the industrial varieties, more than a third of the cobalt, 6 per cent of the tin, over 200,000 tons of copper per year, and substantial quantities of radium and gold. The ubiquitous Lever Combine has a monopoly of palm oil and other agricultural products.

Today, the Belgian Congo is the richest known source of uranium.

The Sudan, it will be recalled, was conquered by Britain in the name of Egypt. Egypt paid two-thirds of the cost of conquest and the major part of the cost of administration for a long time afterward; but the profits from the exploitation of the Sudan went entirely to British capitalists. The Sudanese transportation system was modernized and roads were built on the same terms as in Egypt. As the Sudan became a producer of fine quality cotton, British capital was interested in cotton plantations. The Sudan Plantations Syndicate, of which ex-Prime Minister Herbert Asquith was a director, came to a remarkable understanding with the government. At 2 shillings (40 cents) an acre, the government forcibly rented from the Sudanese owners all the land over a large area where an irrigation project had been completed. The land was then reallocated to the original farmers on condition that one-third of each plot of thirty acres be planted to cotton. Forty per cent of the proceeds of the cotton crop was allowed the cultivator, and

the Syndicate and the government appropriated 20 and 40 per cent respectively. For the first eight years the Syndicate made an average profit of 25 per cent.

The African has not been allowed to make the most even of the land left him by the imperialist governments. When he has worked diligently and managed to produce salable crops, European businessmen have cheated him of his legitimate share of the profits. When Africans in the Gold Coast, Nyasaland, and some other colonies began to grow considerable quantities of tobacco, cloves, coffee, and cocoa, the monopoly of marketing the crops and in some cases the powers of compulsion over the labor of the producers were given to Europeans by statute. Thus, though technically independent, these African farmers were absolutely at the mercy of the European buyers. To complete the circle of exploitation, the European buyers were at the same time the sellers of consumers goods to the Africans.

Before the Cocoa Commission which investigated the cocoa strike on the Gold Coast in 1938, Sir Ofori Atta testified that European merchants dictated the price at which the African farmer must sell his product, as well as fixed the price at which the farmers had to buy their merchandise; that, irrespective of the quality of the cocoa, the farmer got a fixed price, since grading was done at a later stage; that, when the world price of cocoa rose, the merchants increased the price of some staple goods most in demand, so that the farmer was deprived of the benefit of the increase in the price of cocoa; and that, by controlling produce prices and the prices of trade goods, the European buyer-merchant had made the African farmer a virtual serf.

Attempts have been made from time to time to prove that colonial possessions have not really paid, that the burden of colonies has been stoically borne by imperialist powers solely for humanitarian reasons. To bear out this theory, instances have been cited of business ventures that have either returned a very low rate of profit or have been losing investments. Statistics do not sustain such a theory.

Undoubtedly some investments in Africa have returned rather modest profits. It has been estimated that the British South Africa Co. paid a mean average dividend of 2.1 per cent on capital invested, and that the Rand gold mines in Transvaal yielded an average annual dividend of 4.1 per cent between 1887-1931. If some profits have been low, others have been sensationally high. The high rate of profit from Northern Rhodesian copper mines has already been mentioned. By the end of 1936, total investment in diamond fields in the Union of South Africa was less than £20,000,000; the value of diamond production amounted to over £320,000,000; the net dividend was over £80,000,000; in 16 years, the Union of South Africa received over £32,000,000 in taxation and share of profits; international firms dealing in diamonds also made large profits; and a large portion of the wealth the diamond mines produced helped finance the Rand gold mines.

Those who minimize profits from colonies often mention the building of railroads at a loss to the investors. They also refer to the railways as having been of especial benefit to the colonial peoples. The real picture is very different. Railroads in colonial countries have been built either to transport raw materials to the nearest port, or for military purposes. "It is obvious that in any evaluation of investments the military outlay has to be kept in mind;" writes H. A. Wieschhoff, "that is, the expenses should be budgeted statistically for defense of the home country rather than carried statistically as a liability against the dependency. Or, on the other hand, if railroads have been built with a view towards the future economic development of the territory, their amortization should also be statistically postponed. If present-day colonial balance sheets were viewed with such considerations in mind, the profitable aspect of colonial empires would become much clearer."<sup>85</sup>

Imperialist countries have profited from their colonial possessions in many other tangible and intangible ways. France, for example, has drawn heavily on her African possessions for military purposes. The sums contributed by French West Africa

to swell France's military budget became increasingly larger, amounting to more than 10 million francs in 1939. Colonies have supplied high-salaried positions to Europeans; though their number has been rather small, the turnover in speedily enriched personnel has been rather great. To all this must be added the prestige that is derived from owning colonial possessions. Belgium and Portugal would have been nonentities without their empires, and Italy without Libya would have carried little weight in world politics.

"Investors in this and other countries," writes the British journal *Peace Aims*, "have drawn enormous dividends from enterprises of the nature of the Northern Rhodesian copper mines. Numerous Europeans have derived their by no means ungenerous salaries and pensions from colonial soil and spent a large part of them at home. Above all, European industry has had the inestimable advantage of absorbing immense quantities of raw material at the low prices made possible by the cheapness of more or less restrainedly exploited Native labour, while selling a considerable amount of finished products back at the high prices conditioned by the relative expensiveness of more or less organized labour in the European countries. Individuals may have lost money in colonial investment; but European civilisation as a whole has been materially the gainer."<sup>68</sup>

In Africa, then, by having political and military power behind them, Europeans were able to acquire millions of acres of fruitful land for a pittance and assure a cheap and abundant labor supply; European merchants, industrialists, and financiers secured unqualified control over the inland trade and the agricultural and mineral resources of the continent; and transferred the maximum amount of wealth from the continent with a minimum amount of return to the people.

Theoretically independent, giant in size and harboring one-fifth of mankind, China was nevertheless pitilessly exploited by imperialist powers since the Treaty Ports were opened. The First Opium War of 1839-41 was fought both for the profits

from the opium trade and those to be derived from cheap cotton with which Lancashire was ready to flood China. The stakes in which the foreign powers were interested were the Chinese railways, mines, loans to governments, and commerce.

Since 1861, an Englishman was always the head of the Chinese Maritime Customs. The control of the customs revenues gave extraordinary powers to Britain; by granting or withholding access to the revenues, she could play a decisive role in any civil strife. Such control also made loans so secure, they were often forced on the Chinese government. Though China theoretically recovered her tariff autonomy in 1928, payment on foreign debts from the customs revenue continued. Until 1937, while this revenue amounted to 60 per cent of the total Chinese revenue, 30 per cent of it was earmarked for payment of foreign debt.

By 1925, foreign powers had profitably invested hundreds of millions of dollars in about 6,000 miles of railroad in China. Chinese commerce had developed to nearly 2 billion dollars a year, of which Japan obtained 24 per cent, the United States 17 per cent, and Great Britain obtained 9 per cent in direct commerce and another 25 per cent through the port of Hongkong. British merchants were making over 200 million dollars annually in their China trade.

At the time of Japan's major offensive against China, foreign capital had gained a stranglehold on Chinese economy. Conservative estimates put British investments at approximately \$1,250,000,000, chiefly in banks, railways, shipping, and tobacco; Japanese investment, excluding Manchuria, at about \$600,000,000, largely in shipping, mining, and cotton; and American and French at \$250,000,000 each. By 1937, almost half of China's total annual production of coal was supplied by foreign-controlled mines. Japanese capital dominated iron mining, the entire output being shipped to Japan. China's banks were almost exclusively in the hands of the British, the Japanese, and the Americans, and the first two controlled more than half the cotton industry. Her railroads were owned by British,



Japanese, and European capital, and over two-thirds of her shipping tonnage was in foreign hands. Foreign export and import firms, financed by foreign banks, largely handled China's foreign trade. The British American Tobacco Company monopolized the cigarette trade, the French ran the post office, and the British and Americans collected taxes on the sale of salt.

With such extensive control over China's economy, it was inevitable that foreign powers would exert tremendous influence over the political life of the country. To maintain this control, it was equally inevitable that these powers would make every effort to keep China weak by encouraging internal division. And, to continue the profitable exploitation of China, it was to be expected that, in the event of a strong democratic movement arising in China, these foreign powers would support the most reactionary Chinese.

No wonder the average income of a Chinese never rose above 25 dollars a year!

After the turn of the century, and especially after the first world war, American imperialism took giant strides. Under the protection of the American eagle, a tremendous amount of capital was invested to advantage in much of overseas America and the South American countries.

Many of the American possessions acquired a primarily strategic importance. Guam, Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico were economically not as valuable to the United States as, for example, Indonesia was to Holland and India to Britain. Whatever profit could be made out of these possessions were, however, made largely by Americans.

Besides the magnificent Pearl Harbor naval base, Hawaii was valuable to the American sugar interests and plantation owners. Though the Organic Act of 1917 prohibited foreigners from owning more than 500 acres in Puerto Rico, Washington made no protest when Americans bought up much larger tracts of land. American investment in the Philippines amounted to no more than 225 million dollars, but the United States, taking

about four-fifths of the Philippines' exports and supplying about two-thirds of their imports, dominated Philippine economy. Alaska, bought for \$7,200,000, is estimated to have brought in over 3 billion dollars of wealth to the United States.

It was in Latin America that American capital found the most lucrative field for investment. At the beginning of the century, about 285 million dollars, or half of American capital abroad, was invested in South America. By 1920, the amount had increased to nearly 2 billion dollars, and it multiplied more than four times in the next decade. In 1941, even after the loss suffered during the depression of the 'thirties, about 6 billion American dollars were invested in Latin America.

Foreign capital investment as such does not necessarily reduce a country to colonial or semi-colonial status. British investment in the United States, and American investment in Canada, were not followed by direct or indirect political control. Capital investment in Latin America followed a very different pattern. Looking for special concessions, monopoly, and loans to governments at a high rate of interest, American capitalists supported the most reactionary elements across the border, since only such elements would sacrifice national welfare to favor absentee investors. As in direct colonial countries, capital in Latin America was invested largely in mining, agriculture, transportation and communications systems, and loans to governments. This resulted in a lopsided economic development in these countries, making them exporting countries with only one or two commodities to export. Lacking diversification of production, these countries became entirely dependent upon outside forces over which they exercised no control.

Thus, for instance, Guatemala lived mostly on the export of coffee and bananas; Venezuela, on the export of oil and its by-products; El Salvador, coffee; Bolivia, tin; Cuba, sugar; Costa Rica, coffee and bananas; Colombia, coffee and oil; Panama, bananas; Brazil, coffee; Ecuador, cocoa; Chile, nitrates and copper; Santo Domingo, sugar and cocoa; Haiti, coffee; Hon-

duras, bananas ; and Puerto Rico, sugar. These countries, and others like them, were independent in name only because, by controlling most of their products and the markets where these products were disposed of, foreign monopolies ruled their destinies.

## ❀ Chapter IV ❀

# HOW PEOPLE IN COLONIES FARED

**U**NDER DUTCH RULE, the condition of the Indonesians steadily deteriorated. Peasants who had formerly tilled their own land became farm laborers or tenant farmers. As large-scale plantations became increasingly profitable, civil rights were skirted or violated to force the people to work on them for pitifully small wages.

Though the Dutch declared their intention to protect the people's community rights over the land, ways were always found to alienate Indonesian property. Between 1705 and 1829, large plots of land were sold to Europeans by various governors of Java. This was done, it was stated noncommittally, "owing to lack of money and for other reasons." A feudalistic relationship was established in these estates between the owners and the people living on the land. The owners were given the right to demand fifty-two days of labor a year from the people, which in practice was always stretched to a longer period.

During the period of the Culture System, there was no problem of depriving the farmer of his land, since the farmer was forced to devote a good part of his land and his time to cultivate crops for the government. The Agrarian Law of 1870, however, laid down the principle that all land not in private hands was to be considered public domain open to European concessionaires. Although this law seemed eminently equitable, actually a good deal of land traditionally belonging to Indonesians passed into the hands of European leaseholders. The over-all method finally evolved was that of long-term leases or rental from Indonesian farmers and puppet princes.

The plantations on the outer islands regularly imported "contract coolie" labor, mainly from Java. Laborers were indentured for a three-year period, with an option on signing up again. Although the contracts provided for free transportation, housing, medical care, and regular wages, their fulfillment was left entirely up to the plantation owners, who systematically violated these terms. Disaffection was so rife that the government attached a penal sanction against laborers who ran away from the plantations.

Though rich in natural resources, Indonesia was kept as an agricultural and raw material producing colony of the Netherlands. Industry was practically nonexistent. In 1938, 1,630,000 Indonesians were classified as industrial workers. Of these, 670,000 were engaged principally in small-scale handicrafts such as spinning, weaving, sewing, and batik-printing. Small plants, such as sarong shops, employed another 840,000. Only 120,000, or less than 2 per cent of the population, worked in large factories such as textile mills, sugar refineries, and automobile assembly plants.

Labor in Indonesia was cheap, and it was kept cheap by discouraging education and stultifying trade unions. Until the second half of the nineteenth century, very little attention was paid to the education of the Indonesians, although elaborate facilities were available to children of European residents. In 1848 the government appropriated 25,000 florins to set up schools, primarily intended to supply a corps of native clerks and minor officials.

In 1854, under pressure of liberal opinion in the Netherlands, the government of Indonesia recognized the principle that it should provide schooling for the Indonesians. The liberals, however, were scarcely moved by humanitarian motives. "As the Javanese becomes instructed about his own history," said the liberal leader, Thorbecke, "as it is pointed out to him what he was without us, as the door of Christian culture is opened to him by us, I believe, Mr. President, that through that more than anything else the bond between the Indies and our country will

be strengthened.”<sup>67</sup> Even then education progressed at a snail’s pace, lest it foster discontent among the people.

Eventually, at the turn of the century, a slightly better school system was created, but it still remained woefully inadequate. As late as 1941, education was neither free nor compulsory, the subjects taught were extremely limited, and only about 5 to 10 per cent of government expenditure went for education. After nearly three hundred years of Dutch rule, a little over 5 per cent of the Indonesians were literate.

Until 1798, the Dutch East India Company ruled Indonesia largely through the Indonesian princes. The Company was satisfied so long as it could obtain monopoly of trade and natural resources. Only after the Netherlands government assumed direct control of the colony was a systematic approach made toward administering Indonesia.

The Dutch government of Indonesia has been conceded to be the most deliberately elaborate form of “indirect rule.” Most of the territory outside of Java was left in the hands of local princes. By the side of each prince was a Dutch “adviser,” who was the real ruler. The “adviser” had complete control of the finances of the prince’s territory; but the more important princes were given liberal allowances to keep them contented and loyal. For example, in 1939, the prince of Surakarta managed to spend an allowance of a million dollars as his personal expenses. In Java itself, about 7 per cent of the area was under four Indonesian sultans. The rest of Java was divided into seventy “regencies,” nominally ruled by native potentates selected by the governor-general.

Before the second world war, the supreme ruler in Indonesia was a governor-general appointed by the Crown. He was assisted by an advisory council of five members appointed by him with the approval of the Crown. In 1917, the central government in Batavia set up a People’s Council, or *Volksraad*. Of its 60 members, 30 were Indonesians, 25 were Dutch and 5 were “alien Asiatics,” usually Chinese and Arab. The Dutch residents, it should be noted, received representation entirely out of

proportion to their numbers. Thirty-eight of these members were elected indirectly by various local councils, while the rest were appointed by the governor-general. The inauguration of the *Volksraad* was considered to be a great advance in democratic self-government. In reality, it was merely a debating society with no power to initiate laws and no control over the finances of the country.

India under the British fared much as Indonesia did under the Dutch. The land problem became acute, the old economy was shattered without being replaced by any new economy, and political rights were extended to the people only under pressure—grudgingly and in minute doses.

The administration of the British East India Company was full of confusion, graft, plunder, and nepotism. Primarily a trading concern, it ruled the country not for the benefit of the people but for its own financial enhancement. As administrators, the Company's main source of revenue was from land. New schemes were constantly devised to secure the maximum amount of revenue the land would yield. The oppressed peasantry either left their farms or rebelled, and the uprisings were ruthlessly suppressed. In economically advanced Bengal the Indian merchants and bankers were wiped out as internal trade systematically passed into the hands of the Company's employees.

In the nineteenth century India was transformed from a small-scale manufacturing and exporting country to a market for British goods. Besides superior technology, British industries had state support in opening up the Indian market. By raising the duty on Indian goods imported into Britain, the state protected the British industries, and by lowering the duty on British goods entering India, it strengthened the hands of the British industrialists against the Indian manufacturers.

As the century progressed, more and more textiles and other manufactures produced in Britain were exported to India. Though their skill was second to none, the Indian spinners,

weavers, and other artisans and handicraftsmen were completely ruined because they had neither modern machinery nor state protection. Since no compensating development of modern industry to absorb these people was permitted by the government, the result was disastrous. Prosperous, ancient, populous manufacturing towns of India were soon in ruins. Millions of dispossessed and disinherited artisans and craftsmen, spinners, weavers, potters, tanners, smelters, and smiths swelled the ranks of the homeless and the unemployed. Ironically enough, connection with the first industrialized country in the world set back Indian economy instead of advancing it; where the unemployed British handicraft workers had flocked to the rising industrial centers, the unemployed Indian workers were forced to migrate to the villages to fall back on agriculture. This was the beginning of the terrible overpressure on land that to this day remains one of the most critical problems of Indian economy.

Even after India passed to the Crown, the pressure on the land continued. The percentage of the population dependent upon agriculture rose from 61.1 per cent in 1891 to 66.5 in 1901, 72.2 in 1911, and 73.0 in 1921, and continued climbing upward. The intensified need for land resulted in the fragmentation of farms into minute parcels. As Sir Thomas Holderness pointed out, India "feeds and to some extent clothes its population from what  $\frac{2}{3}$  acre per head can produce. There is probably no country in the world where the land is required to do so much."<sup>68</sup> At the same time poor peasants continued to be dispossessed of their farms. Thus, while the land-hunger mounted, more and more land went out of cultivation. In 1939, less than half of the arable land was being cultivated.

Under British rule, most of the land passed into the hands of giant landlords, who rack-rented the tenant farmers. Poverty and the small acreage prevented the peasants from using modern tools or scientific fertilizers. The quality of the soil deteriorated and the yield per acre decreased. Irrigation canals and flood-control systems, essential to Indian agriculture, were neglected by the government until recently. In the Ganges delta in and



around Bengal, the excellent pre-British canal system fell into disrepair, and railway embankments thrown up later almost destroyed it. Cut off from the loam-bearing Ganges water, many areas became sterile, while others became seriously water-logged and breeding grounds for malaria mosquitoes. No attempt was made to put up proper embankments in the lower course of the Ganges to prevent erosion, which swallowed up villages, groves, and cultivated fields every year.

In the twentieth century the government belatedly sponsored some noteworthy irrigation projects, especially in northern India. But when British propagandists try to impress people abroad by citing the acreage supplied by the irrigation projects, it is well to remember that there is either too little or too much rainfall in most of India, making artificial water supply and flood control methods vital for agriculture. In countries where there is even rainfall throughout the year and irrigation works are an auxiliary, such figures would indeed be impressive. For India's needs, the government's dams, canals, and ditches were a drop in the bucket. Besides, many farmers could not avail themselves of the benefits of the water supply because of the high rates charged.

Fractional landholdings, constantly increasing government assessment or landlord's rent, and primitive methods of cultivation, made for a peasantry perennially in debt to the money-lender. Just prior to the second world war peasant indebtedness amounted to nearly  $1\frac{1}{2}$  billion pounds.

Before the first world war, industrial development of India was exceedingly slow and slight. There were a few railway repair workshops, and faint signs of a steel factory. No machinery or machine tools were produced.

The German blockade during the war of 1914-18 forced Britain to promote some degree of industrial development. Government subsidies were granted to the iron and steel concerns, and a protective fence was thrown around other industries by imposing a tariff on all imports. Business boomed quickly and spectacularly. Bombay cotton mills paid a dividend of 120 per

cent and some others paid as high as 250 per cent. British-owned jute mills paid an average dividend of 140 per cent. Attracted by such high returns, a Niagara of British capital flowed into India; from an investment of £15 million in 1908-10, or 9 per cent of the total British capital exports, investments rose to £36 million, or more than 25 per cent of the total.

When the threat to the empire passed, the war-inspired enthusiasm for Indian industries cooled off. The hectic post-war boom resulted in an economic crisis and collapse. By manipulating the exchange value of the rupee, the government brought ruin to the Indian importers. Subsidies were withdrawn from industries owned by Indians, and applications for further subsidies were rejected. Import duties were again lowered, and the tariff system was rearranged to give British products a competitive advantage over non-empire and domestic products in the Indian market. Many newly organized Indian firms went bankrupt in the following years.

While the people of India suffered incredibly during the depression of the 'thirties, the government extracted in full the payments on home charges and interest on public debt. There was no moratorium or reduction on these charges, as was inaugurated on debt payments in other countries during the post-war slump. The Indian people traditionally saved their money in the form of a few gold or silver ornaments; since they were too poor to pay in any other way, they had to use up this gold to meet their obligations to the government. In the seven years 1931-37, this flow of gold to Britain amounted to £241 million—larger than the total British gold reserves before the crisis.

Between the first and second world wars, a few light industries, such as sugar, matches, cigarettes, soap, paints, and rubber goods, developed in India, many of them being branch factories established by British firms. In 1939 the output of Indian steel was around 700,000 tons—less than that of Poland and one-sixth that of Japan. The degree of industrialization was indicated by the fact that, out of a total population of close to

400 million, only 1,751,000 were classified as industrial workers under the Factories Act.

Politically, the British government carved India into a crazy-quilt pattern of innumerable Native States intermingled with British Indian provinces. For administrative purposes British India was divided into eleven sections, known as provinces, each of which was ruled by a governor appointed by the British Crown with the approval of Parliament. India as a whole was ruled by the Viceroy, also appointed by the Crown. The governors were responsible only to the Viceroy, who in turn was responsible to the Secretary of State for India in London. Within and in between these provinces were scattered 562 Indian princes' states.

Before 1857, British policy had been sweepingly annexationist; but the revolt of 1857 brought about a change in that policy. The British government recalled that, before the revolt, a few officials in India had observed stirrings of rebellion among the people, and had advised using the princes as "breakwaters." The princes who had survived the revolt were not unwilling to come to terms with Britain: these princes were also aware that their subjects were beginning to look upon them as archaic and superfluous. On April 30, 1860 Viceroy Lord Canning explained the new policy: "It was long ago said by Sir John Malcolm that if we made India into *zillahs* (British districts) it was not in the nature of things that our empire should last fifty years; but if we could keep up a number of Native States without political power, but as royal instruments, we should exist in India as long as our naval supremacy was maintained. Of the substantial truth of this opinion I have no doubt; and the recent events have made it more deserving of our attention than ever." This was the formula Britain followed; and, since there were not enough princes left by 1858, others were artificially created to raise their number to 562.

To gain the wholehearted support of these relics of feudalism, the British government by treaty guaranteed them protection

in case their subjects attempted to overthrow them. The Report of the Indian States Committee of 1929 clarified this point when it stated: "The promise of the King Emperor to maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights and dignities carries with it a duty of protecting the Prince against attempts to eliminate him and to substitute another form of government." The purpose of setting up these puppet princes was stated in unambiguous terms by L. F. Rushbrook-Williams, Adviser to the Indian States Delegation to London in 1930, when he said: "The situation of these feudatory states, checkerboarding all India as they do, are a great safeguard. It is like establishing a vast network of friendly fortresses in a debatable territory. It would be difficult for a general rebellion against the British to sweep India because of this network of powerful loyal Native States." <sup>69</sup>

Within the part of India ruled directly by the British, political rights were doled out at long intervals in the shape of "constitutional reforms." The last such reform before the second world war was the Constitution of 1935, which proposed certain changes both in the central government under the Viceroy and the provincial administration under the governors. The central government scheme never went into effect; the provincial scheme was put through in 1937.

According to this constitution, 30 million people, or 11 per cent of the population of British India, were given franchise to vote for the provincial Legislative Assemblies. The right to vote was restricted to those who possessed a certain amount of property, taxable income, and literacy. Out of 1,585 seats in the eleven Legislative Assemblies, 657 were declared general seats open to all, while the rest were divided up among various religious, business, and other communities.

The central government consisted of two Chambers: the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly. Half the members of the Council of State were nominated by the Viceroy, and the rest were elected by less than 18,000 voters belonging to the upper stratum of Indian society. The majority of the members

of the Legislative Assembly were elected by voters numbering less than one-half of one per cent of the population.

Like the *Volksraad* in Indonesia, the Indian central and provincial assemblies were without any real power. The Viceroy and the provincial governors retained dictatorial powers in their hands, while the assemblies merely went through the motions of democratic procedure.

The condition of the people of India after more than a century of British rule beggars description. Only twelve in one hundred were literate, there was neither free nor compulsory education. The average annual income per head was 18 dollars. The Indian economists Shah and Khambata put it thus: "The average Indian income is just enough either to feed two men in every three of the population, or give them all two in place of every three meals they need, on condition that they all consent to go naked, live out of doors all the year round, have no amusement or recreation, and want nothing else but food, and that the lowest, the coarsest, the least nutritious." <sup>70</sup>

During the occupation of India by the British, industrialization of the country had scarcely begun. Ruled by highly industrialized Britain, the overwhelming majority of the Indians lived in mud huts in little villages, in unbelievable filth and squalor, reminiscent of the early Middle Ages in Western Europe. They made a feeble attempt at making a living by tilling a minute parcel of land, usually as a tenant farmer. They were ill-housed, ill-clothed, and undernourished to the degree that five to six million of them died every year from preventable diseases. Maternal and infant mortality rates were six times higher than those of England. Average life expectancy was 25 years.

With a few exceptions, imperialism followed the general pattern set by the Dutch and the British in Indonesia and India.

The French divided Indo-China into five areas. Cochinchina was ruled directly as a colony, while in Annam, Cambodia, Tonkin, and Laos, French officials ruled through puppet prince-

lings. Full dictatorial powers rested in the hands of the French Governor-General. The majority of the people were involved in the cultivation of rice, making Indo-China a one-crop country at the mercy of the vagaries of the world market. After three-quarters of a century of French rule, only 5 per cent of the Indo-Chinese were literate, and the standard of living was appallingly low, the average annual income per head being less than 10 dollars.

In Africa, exclusive of Egypt, imperialist powers have employed both direct and indirect rule. The general tendency has been to maintain tribal rule as far as possible, with real power in the hands of colonial officials who remained behind the scenes. Where the African came under the direct rule of the European, his political rights were either mere window-dressing or totally nonexistent.

After they were conquered by the Europeans, the Africans suffered even worse than the colonial Asians. Forced labor was quite common in the African colonies in the early years of this century, and was used in many places even during the last war. The railways in French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa were built by forced labor. In the Belgian Congo, forced labor was common practice. Kenya and Nyasaland legalized sixty days of compulsory paid labor a year by passing ordinances to that effect.

One of the most repugnant forms of securing workers was the system of contract labor. By painting alluring pictures of excellent working conditions, recruiting agents persuaded Africans to sign or put their mark on contracts which they could not read but which bound them to work for a given length of time. Any violation of the contract terms was considered a penal offense punishable by fines amounting to anything from half a month's to almost a year's wages, and by prison sentences of one to six months. In the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, European employers found a simple way of transforming the African worker into a virtual slave. Since the worker, signed up for five years, could not read the contract, he

was sure to violate some of its tricky clauses. Brought before the local courts, he was often punished by an extension of the life of the contract.

Direct taxation has been a normal source of income of every civilized government. In pre-capitalist days, the citizenry paid as tax a portion of their produce, which varied according to the quantity produced. Today, in civilized countries, a man whose income is exceedingly low, or who earns nothing, pays no direct taxes. In colonial Africa, however, the imperialist governments used their power of taxation both to enrich the treasuries and to insure a steady and cheap labor supply for European enterprises.

The common device was to impose a poll tax or a hut tax, or both. In some places—Nigeria, for example—a fixed assessment was made on a whole village or community. The rate of the poll tax, which had to be paid by every adult male African, varied according to locality, from one dollar to four dollars a year. This was no trifling sum to a British East African whose family income per year averaged only 12 dollars. The hut tax was a similar amount levied on every inhabited hut. Since in African families the number of huts corresponded to the size of the household, the African with a large family was forced either to pay a high tax or to crowd as many people as he could into one hut. Since 1935, in some African colonies the hut tax has been changed to a tax on the family. Needless to say, Europeans paid neither the hut nor the poll tax. Whereas the African often had to pay as much as a third of his family income in taxes, the highest incomes of the Europeans were nowhere taxed more than one-tenth.

Besides the direct tax the African had to pay simply because he was born an African, he also had to shoulder the burden of additional indirect taxes. Much of the consumer goods sold to the Africans were imported from abroad, and heavy duties were imposed on them by the governments. In British East Africa, the rate of duty on such necessities as clothing, hardware, etc., was approximately 50 per cent *ad valorem*. On the other hand,

machinery, trucks, fencing materials, and similar goods bought exclusively by European enterprises, were allowed to enter duty free. Another form of taxation was a periodic extra hut tax on the Africans to cover such expenses of the local government as roadbuilding and water supply; for similar improvements in their areas the Europeans paid no such extra taxes.

In return for the land that was taken from them, the back-breaking labor forced from them, and the unequal burden of taxation they had to bear, what did the Africans get from their conquerors?

In the field of education the surface had barely been scratched. Nowhere was education free or compulsory; only a minute proportion of African children received any schooling at all. In the Belgian Congo, out of a total population of 11 million, about 460,000 were attending school in 1935. In French West Africa, out of a total population of 14 million, there were only 67,347 school pupils, and in French Equatorial Africa, with a population of nearly 3½ million, 18,952 students were attending school. The proportion of children of school age receiving any education at all in the British African colonies ranged from 8 to 20 per cent. In the Gold Coast, four children out of five received no schooling of any kind, and less than one-half of one per cent got past the primary stage. "Authorities have calculated," writes Leonard Barnes, "that at our present rate of progress it will be 700 years before the natives of even the Gold Coast can read and write their own language. (Or 3,500 years, if the natural increase of population is taken into account.)"<sup>71</sup>

Even this limited education was further twisted to conform to the needs of the governments rather than to the needs of the people. Since the imperialist governments and European businessmen needed low paid clerks and office help, emphasis was put on turning out such African workers, and technical education was practically nonexistent. It goes without saying that provision for the education of white children was far more than adequate.



The infant mortality rate in the African colonies is a fairly accurate barometer of how the people fared in terms of food, clothing, and shelter. In 1936, in Nyasaland, 172 children died for every 1,000 born. For the lower Congo, the figure was 175 per thousand; for Nigeria, 300 per thousand; for northern Uganda, 350 per thousand; and for Kenya, 400 per thousand. For comparison, it might be mentioned that in 1936 infant mortality rates in Britain and France were 59 and 69 per thousand, respectively.

The African colonial was not only politically disfranchised and territorially segregated; he had to suffer the additional indignity of carrying an identification tag and one or more passes that restricted his movements and turned his status into virtual serfdom. In British West Africa, in French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies, Africans working for Europeans had to carry "identity cards." In some other territories African farm laborers working for European landowners had to have their permits signed by the employers if they wished to leave the farm; by simply refusing to sign such permits, the employers could force the laborer to stay on the farm indefinitely.

Pass laws in their most grotesque form were enacted in the Union of South Africa. There the African had to secure separate passes to seek work, to travel beyond the confines of the ghetto in which he was forced to live, or to appear on the streets between 9 P.M. and 6 A.M. A male African in Transvaal had to carry the incredible number of eleven passes. Policemen could demand to see a pass at any time, and failure to produce one on demand was declared a criminal offense punishable by fine or imprisonment.

With so many bewildering varieties of passports to carry on his person, it is no wonder that pass law violations have always been numerous. In 1936, 62,000 Africans were arrested for not being able to produce the proper pass on demand. Between 1939-41, in the Transvaal alone, 297,659 Africans were arrested for not possessing the correct passes; of these, 283,823 were prosecuted and 273,790 were fined or sent to prison. Oc-

casionally, the Native Affairs Department would exempt educated Africans from carrying passes; nevertheless, when accosted by the police, such an African had to produce evidence of his qualifications for exemption, and, since failure to do so would lead to arrest, this was no different from showing a pass.

Besides ensuring the presence of Africans where their labor was needed or where they could be easily located for labor draft or where they could be kept under strict observation, the pass laws were also an added source of income for the governments. "The pass laws superimposed upon mass poverty have accentuated native discontent," wrote Sir John Harris in the *Manchester Guardian* in 1938; "thousands of natives are being hurtled into prison for pass law offenses which have not the remotest connection either with crime or even with any desire to commit an offense. At the same time the revenue benefits to the tune of £500,000 per annum . . ."

By the time the second world war began, colonial Africa presented a picture of imperialism at its horrifying worst. Here imperialist rule was most callous, exploitation of the subject people most violent, racial discrimination most naked. To the Africans, civil liberties were dreams, and formation of trade unions illegal. Justice was dealt to him *unevenhanded*, the scales weighted heavily in favor of the Europeans.

As evidence that imperialism can be benevolent and beneficent, the imperialist-minded customarily point to American rule over the Philippines. To verify or refute this, we might look at the condition of the Filipino before the Japanese overran the islands.

It should be remembered that the Philippines, when they were acquired, were not essential to the expansion of American economy. This fact, together with pressure from American liberals, resulted in the Filipinos gaining certain advantages that other colonials never had. Free and compulsory education was established, certain sanitary measures were adopted, and the Filipinos, within a comparatively short time, began to elect

their own government officials according to a constitution framed by them, although ultimate power still remained vested in the government of the United States.

Nevertheless, American businessmen and financiers made whatever profit there was to be made out of the resources and cheap labor of the Philippines. The economy of the country was geared to that of the United States to such a degree that American capital had virtual power of life and death over the Filipinos. It became and remained a typical colonial economy, inasmuch as the country exported agricultural products and imported manufactured goods from abroad. About three-quarters of all trade was conducted with the United States.

After nearly half a century of American rule, 72 per cent of Filipino men and the majority of women depended on work in the fields for a living. Most of these farmers were either tenants or laborers on the estates owned by feudalistic landlords or by the church. According to the 1939 census, only 1.3 per cent of the population owned farms of over 50 acres. In one district in central Luzon—the rice bowl of the Philippines—2 per cent of the people owned 90 per cent of the land. Wages of agricultural workers were as low as fifteen cents a day. Average monthly wages were about five dollars, whereas the average cost of living for the agrarian laborer was over nine dollars a month, covering only the barest necessities, and not including taxes, medical treatment, and other such expenses. Inevitably, the ordinary peasants were perennially in debt to the landlords, who easily managed to circumvent legal restrictions and charged usurious rates of interest.

In the January, 1934 issue of the *Philippine Magazine*, Mariano D. Manawis drew a vivid picture from personal experience of the life of a tenant farmer in a central Luzon province:

The Nueva Ecija peasant lives with his family of five or six in a small house on a corner of the piece of land he cultivates—big or small as it pleased the *Hacendero* (landlord) to apportion him. No matter how industrious and thrifty he may be,

he cannot hope ever to own the land he labors on, nor any other piece of land in the province, for in Nueva Ecija and other Central Luzon provinces, the agricultural lands are owned by a few rich *Hacenderos*, and no tenants' money can buy such land. Nor can he shift, for he has no money to take him to kinder lands.

He usually hires his work animals from the *Hacendero*. He keeps them in a small enclosure at night, and gets up at four or five o'clock in the morning to let them graze under his own watchful eye. If a tenant's carabao is even found in the rice field of another tenant, whether or not the animal has done any damage, the tenant pays a fine of ten *cavans* (a *cavan* is equivalent to somewhat over two bushels) of *palay* (rice-on-the-stalk) to the *Hacendero*—according to the so-called 'Laws of the Hacienda'—made by the *Hacendero* himself.

The *Hacendero* furnishes half of the seed; the other half comes from the tenant. It is sown in the seedbeds in June. When the seedlings are large enough, and the paddies (irrigated fields) ready, the transplanting begins. The tenant does not do this alone, but invites his neighbors to help him. He pays them . . . (a traditional amount) half of which comes from him and half from the landowner.

For whatever amount the tenant borrows for other purposes, the *Hacendero* charges him fifty per cent interest. The *Hacendero* will deny this, because it is against the law, but it is true nevertheless. If a tenant borrows a sum of money equivalent in value at the time to twenty *cavans* of *palay*, the *Hacendero* makes it appear in his book, the item signed or thumb-marked by the tenant, that the latter owes him thirty *cavans*. Such is the easy escape from the so-called usury laws of the Philippines! And on his part, the tenant takes the money at any cost and keeps mum about it. He has no other source of income than farming, and no one but the *Hacendero* would lend him the money he needs.

From the time the transplanting is finished, early August, up to the harvest time, which comes in February, the farmer has practically nothing to do but see that his fields are well supplied with water. He sits at home most of the day, giving his finger and toe-nails—lost in the mud during the plowing and harrowing season—a chance to regrow, or patches his tumble-down house.

When the grain has matured, he makes another trip to the *Hacendero's* office for money to pay those who will help him cut

the *palay* and gather it in bundles for the thrashing. The *trilladora* (thrashing machine) hums in field after field. Sometimes, when the farmer has no more rice to eat, he will himself thrash a small part of the still undivided harvest to save his family from starvation. But if he is caught, he either forfeits the whole harvest to the landowner or is haled to court, whence he goes straight to jail for theft.

Some years ago, the tenant still thrashed his *palay* by spreading it beneath the feet of two or three horses driven side by side in a circle around a bamboo pole. The farmer liked to do this, he was paid for thrashing the *Hacendero's* share, and his children got a great deal of fun out of it, but in this day of the machine, the tenant is not allowed to thrash in this manner. The *Hacendero's* huge *trilladora* must do the job, and for every hundred *cavans* of *palay* thrashed, the tenant pays the landlord ten *cavans*.

The *palay* pouring out of the thrashing machine is put in sacks. After it has been weighed, the farmer hauls it to the provincial road, alongside of which it is piled up and watched day and night, until the *Hacendero's* truck comes along. Then the tenant goes to the landlord once more for his clearance.

Generally, the farmer has had no schooling, and even if he has learned a little reading from his mother or a gray-haired neighbor who taught the *Caton* (primer), he is weak at figures. So before he goes to the office he fills his pockets with small pebbles or grains of corn with which to count. Each grain represents a *cavan* of *palay*.

One half of the harvest goes to the *Hacendero*. Then from his share, the tenant pays the landlord his part of the expenses. Then he pays his personal accounts with interest, these often amounting to thirty or forty *cavans*. Hence, it often happens that even if the harvest comes to a hundred or more *cavans* only one or two *cavans* remain for him and his family in payment for a year of labor.

What about the twelve months until the next harvest? There is no other way: he borrows from the *Hacendero* at the same usurious rate of interest. And so it comes about that the tenant's life on the *haciendas* of Nueva Ecija is reduced to a state of perpetual dependence and indebtedness.

The tenant feels that something should be done about it; he thinks the Government should do something about it, but since it does not, he sometimes considers making the effort to take the matter into his own hands.

He goes to other tenants and they discuss the possibility of forming some sort of peaceful union with the aim of securing better conditions. But he is told that before the first meeting is over they would all be arrested as 'Reds.' And if they escaped the ever-watchful Constabulary agents, there is still the *Hacendero*. The moment he learns that a tenant is a *capisanan* (member of an organization), he would expel him from the *hacienda*. And where could the poor tenant go? Where would he get the money to move to another part of the country and establish himself there? So, generally, he decides to slave on. As long as his wife and his little ones, whom he loves so well, live, he will continue to bow to oppression.

Puerto Rico fared no better than other colonial countries. Here, too, the American government supplied some education and made sporadic gestures of benevolence. On the surface, the island appeared to enjoy self-government; real power rested in the Congress in Washington.

The condition of the Puerto Ricans presented all the earmarks of colonialism. Though the Organic Act of 1900 proscribed foreign firms from owning more than 500 acres of land, sugar corporations violated the Act without risk and acquired estates running into many thousands of acres. In a country of only 2 million people, there were 150,000 *agregados*, or landless peasants, with families averaging 5.6 persons. The per capita income of agricultural workers—the majority of the people—was less than 29 dollars a year. In purchasing power this income was even less than it seemed, since, Puerto Rico being within the tariff wall of the United States, the Puerto Rican had to pay continental U.S. prices for imported goods, most of which were food products. In 1943, nearly half the population of the island registered as unemployed.

Urban workers lived in some of the worst slums in the world, with no sanitation facilities, often with one water tap for hundreds of families. Living conditions of the peasants were appalling beyond description. The mortality rate in Puerto Rico was twice as high, and the death rate from tuberculosis was five times as high, as that in the United States. Nearly 40 per cent

of the urban population and 90 per cent of the rural population suffered from hookworm, and 50 per cent in the coastal plain had malaria. In 1942, there were 497 doctors in the whole island; 370 of them practiced in the 13 largest cities, leaving 127 physicians to care for 1,300,000 persons in the rest of the island.

What about the island possessions which are the outposts of the American Empire? Take a brief look at Guam and American Samoa, which have been under the rule of the United States Navy since 1898 and 1899, respectively.

President McKinley assured the Guamanians "that the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation, substituting the mild sway of justice and right for arbitrary rule." Yet, according to former Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes, American naval governors of Guam prohibited the ringing of the church bells in the morning, whistling on the streets while passing the governor's palace, the use of the Chamorro language in the government or in the schools, and collected and burned the dictionaries of the Chamorro language. The naval government replaced the Guamanian native police with United States Marines, established segregated schools, and heavily taxed the people of Guam—but not the Navy personnel living in the colony. Congress ignored the petitions of the Guamanians for a clarification of their rights and status.

In Samoa, again according to Harold Ickes, the Samoans lived under naval absolutism. The naval governor was an American Pooh-bah, combining in himself the legislature, executive, and court. Fantastic laws based on ordinances were imposed on the people by a succession of tyrannical governors. Section 6 of the Law of March 8, 1927, for example, decreed that "In view of the fact that so much time has been wasted since the beginning of this year in cricket games between villages (some of which were played without authority), no permission will be granted for *malagas* [festivals] without further notice." Section 8 of the same law declared that violation of this law would

be considered an offense against the government and the civil rights of the citizens, and would be dealt with accordingly. Section 98 of the Naval code for Samoa declared that "There shall be levied annually on the 15th day of December upon every male Samoan, who shall have reached the height of 5 feet and 1 inch, a general personal tax, which shall be known as the poll tax, the amount of which shall be fixed by the governor." Harold Ickes summed up the nature of American naval government as "grotesque, inefficient, tyrannical, not wantonly cruel, but faithless to pledges given."<sup>72</sup>

Since the end of the second world war, some liberal thinkers have been publicizing the imminent end of imperialism. There have been a few who have even been convinced that the imperialist powers have at last had a change of heart, and have decided to grant independence to their colonies in the very near future. They have been citing the example set by the United States in granting independence to the Philippines in July, 1946, and the British government's declaration on February, 1947 to withdraw from India by June, 1948. The *present* condition of these two colonies will be discussed later on; but it may be enlightening to observe a case history of an economically and strategically important colony that was granted independence as long ago as 1922, and see what independence granted by an imperialist power means in practice. The example is Egypt.

We have already seen how Britain managed to conquer Egypt. From 1883 to 1907, Lord Cromer, as British High Commissioner, was the virtual dictator of Egypt. In 1913, as a result of agitation by a growing nationalist movement, the British government allowed the formation of a Legislative Assembly, without, of course, any power. Nevertheless, the Assembly displayed a strong nationalist sentiment. Taking advantage of the outbreak of the first world war, Britain declared Egypt a British protectorate and ruled the country with an iron hand. The press was gagged, not even a pretense was made



to maintain civil liberties, and all nationalist agitation was suppressed.

When the first world war ended, Egyptian nationalists appointed a delegation, headed by the venerable leader Saad Zaghlul Pasha, to present Egypt's case before the Paris Peace Conference. To prove that they had the backing of the whole nation, these leaders set up the Wafd (Peace) party, and soon developed a wide mass following. While the delegation was preparing to leave for Paris to present their claim for self-determination so eloquently proclaimed by such Allied leaders as Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson, the British authorities arrested the whole delegation and exiled them to Malta.

This provoked a bloody revolution in 1919 and, to crush it, the British government despatched General Allenby as a Special High Commissioner to Egypt.

When the revolution was suppressed, the Egyptians took to passive resistance. Finally, Britain sent a commission headed by Lord Milner, the celebrated empire-builder of South African fame, as a gesture of conciliation.

The Milner Commission, composed entirely of Englishmen, was greeted by the Egyptians with boycotts and riots. Even Lord Milner was stymied and had to report that the situation called for genuine concessions. While the Milner Report was being considered, the British once again arrested the newly released Zaghlul and sent him to prison in the Seychelles Islands.

On February 28, 1922, Britain declared Egypt an "independent sovereign state;" but the declaration contained several "absolute" reservations: Security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt; the defense of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect; the right to protect foreign interests and foreigners and minorities (who were to be exempt from Egyptian taxation and courts); and the control of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

To the Egyptians, these reservations nullified independence, and they rejected the offer. Martial law continued in effect.

The Khedive Fuad, however, who had been put on the throne by the British during the war, signified his approval of the British proposals by declaring himself King of Egypt in March, 1922. This was the signal for further disturbances and assassination of British officials.

Conditions steadily deteriorated, and the British government was obliged to make further concessions. In August, 1923, they ended martial law and agreed to retire their officials, after the Egyptian government promised to pay \$32,000,000 compensation.

Egypt adopted a constitution, providing for a limited monarchy, a parliament elected by indirect voting, and a cabinet responsible to the parliament. In the elections held in the latter part of 1923, Zaghlul, who was released once again, and the Wafd party carried 188 seats to 29 for all other parties, polling more than 85 per cent of all votes.

Then followed a period of intrigue and direct and indirect interference by the British government in the internal affairs of Egypt, revealing how little independence granted by Britain really meant. The Wafd party campaigned for genuine independence. Periodically, King Fuad dissolved parliament and called for new elections, hoping to get mass support for his collaborationist policies, but the Wafd party invariably polled a heavy majority. With typical imperialist inconsistency, the British government on the one hand maintained that Egypt was independent and, on the other, insisted that only a few Egyptian extremists agitated for independence. After one election in which Zaghlul and the Wafd party had rolled up a resounding victory, British High Commissioner Lord Lloyd forced the choice of the amenable Adli Pasha as Prime Minister. Powerful agitation soon resulted in Adli being replaced by the moderate Sarwat Pasha. But when Sarwat proposed some reforms concerning civil liberties and the right of the people to possess arms, Lord Lloyd ordered warships to Egypt and silenced Sarwat. In April, 1928, when the Egyptians refused to accept a treaty offered by Sir Austen Chamberlain, Lord Lloyd ordered

warships from Malta, suspended parliament, and assumed all effective legislative power. The King declared a dictatorship and ruled by means of rigid censorship and police power.

Lord Lloyd was later replaced by the milder Sir Percy Lorraine. In the elections that followed, the Wafd, headed by Nahas Pasha since the death of Zaghlul, once again scored an overwhelming victory. Once again the King dissolved parliament, removed Nahas Pasha, and assumed dictatorial power. The method used to get rid of Nahas was that of slander, often employed by imperialists in colonial countries against nationalist leaders. On the basis of a suddenly discovered letter—later proven to be forged—Nahas Pasha was accused of corruption and dismissed from office. As a grim sequel to this, when the court later vindicated Nahas, the government prevented the newspapers from publishing the news of his acquittal.

King Fuad chose as his Prime Minister Sidky Pasha, an astute financier who had become the spokesman of the Egyptian aristocracy. Backed by the King's henchmen, the British and Egyptian financial interests and the British government, Sidky conducted a rigged-up election (boycotted by the Wafd), and secured a majority from the slim votes cast. When the minor, Farouk, succeeded the deceased King Fuad, Egypt and Britain came to an agreement. In 1936, Egypt entered the League of Nations. In 1937, Egyptian law became applicable to all who lived in Egypt. Relative quiet prevailed in Egypt when the second world war started.

But it was a deceptive quiet. Britain retained the power to decide the amount of water to be drawn off the river Nile to the north of Egypt for irrigating the Sudan, thus keeping a sword hanging over the heads of the Egyptians, for the Nile was the only source of water supply for Egypt's agriculture. Even Lord Milner had reported: "It is an uncomfortable thought that the regular supply of water by the great river, which is to Egypt not a question of convenience and prosperity, but of life, must always be exposed to some risks as long as the upper reaches of the river are not under Egyptian control."

Looking at the colonial countries as a whole before the second world war, one was struck by certain characteristics common to all of them.

They remained predominantly agricultural countries, exporters of raw material and importers of consumer goods. This export-import system sometimes reached fantastic proportions. The British colonies of the Turks and Caicos Islands, for example, "exported salt to Canada in order to cure the fish which returned to them in tins." In agriculture, emphasis was put on cultivating exportable products, often to the detriment of the food requirements of the local population.

Land in the colonies was held, usually, by feudalistic landlords. Some of these landlords were colonials who were favored by the governments in order to secure them as allies; others were entrepreneurs from the imperialist countries themselves. The peasants were mostly tenants on these giant estates, or agricultural laborers working for hire.

The tenants and laborers were poor beyond description, and invariably in debt to either the landlord or the money-lender. Often the landlord and the money-lender were one and the same person.

Industry was practically nonexistent in the colonies. Processing industries were developed in a few, and in countries like India the textile industry was developed to some extent. But even in India—rich in mineral resources and manpower—there was no heavy industry to speak of.

Their poverty forced the colonial people to work for a pittance in mines, plantations, estates, and factories. Where necessary, as in Africa, imperialist governments passed poll tax and other legislation to ensure a cheap labor supply. By the use of cheap labor and through special privileges granted by the governments, foreign capital investment reaped high rates of profit.

In many colonies trade unions were barred by legal and extra-legal means. Ingenious methods were used in other colonies to either stifle or hamper the growth of trade unions. The usual

procedure was to arrest and imprison trade unions leaders on charges of sedition. Another common method was to accuse a trade union of going into political activity and not confining itself to purely trade union matters.

Poverty, illiteracy, disease, and debt were the common denominators of the colonial countries. Not so very long ago, the British Colonial Office received two reports on conditions in the British Colonial Empire: one made by its Labour Adviser, Major Orde-Browne, and the other by the Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire. Upon reading them, one found an astonishing similarity in how the people in colonies fared under imperialism. The following are a few samples:

*Trinidad*: "Existing diets are of low caloric value and render the consumer unfit for heavy manual work over long periods."

*Jamaica*: "The nutritional state of a distressingly large proportion of the labouring classes and of the children is considered by some observers to be definitely bad. . . . Conditions are aggravated by the prevalence of yaws, hookworm and malaria. The average rate of infection with hookworm disease is about 70 per cent in smaller towns to 96 per cent in many rural areas."

*Barbados*: "It is probably true that for years the agricultural population have been unable to feed their families, probably owing to their size, and to the comparatively small wages they receive."

"Schoolteachers stated as within their knowledge that many children do not have regular meals after Wednesday in each week, and come to school hungry on Thursday and Friday; also, that the weekly wage of the parents, received on Saturday, is insufficient to feed the family for a week."

*Antigua*: "For many children corn-meal pap with sugar is almost the sole article of diet."

*Granada*: "Infants and children suffer from both malnutrition and under-nutrition."

*St. Vincent*: "Malnutrition among children is taken for

granted." [St. Vincent is the principal source of the world's supply of arrowroot, considered a nutritional food for infants and elderly people. K.G.]

*British Honduras*: "Hookworm infestation and malaria take an enormous toll; anemia, due to the above diseases and deficient diet, is very prevalent."

*British Guiana*: "Government medical officers in institutions and in the various villages and rural areas are probably unanimous as to the general malnutrition prevailing among infants."

*The Bahamas*: "Pellagra is very prevalent and malnutrition accounts for a great deal of illness and debility."

*Seychelles*: "The state of nutrition is poor, low resistance to disease . . . The consumption of milk is very low and that of green vegetables almost negligible."

*St. Helena*: ". . . malnutrition begins early in life."

*Aden*: "On January 19, 1939, the colony of Aden celebrated the centenary of the establishment of British rule. An appeal was launched for a centenary memorial fund—to take the form of the establishment of a poor relief scheme."

To the above, add the following facts:

*Nigeria*: Prevalence of yaws, malaria, yellow fever, and sleeping sickness.

*Sierra Leone*: Prevalence of deficiency diseases, such as rickets, due to the fact that the people's diet was grossly lacking in animal proteins and vitamins.

*Gold Coast*: Prevalence of tuberculosis and deficiency diseases.

*Nyasaland*: High incidence of conjunctivitis and tropical ulcers, indicating a latent state of malnutrition in the population.

*Swaziland*: Over 80 per cent of the babies were found suffering from malnutrition.

*Basutoland*: Malnutrition everywhere.

*Bechuanaland*: Malnutrition.

*The Rhodesias*: Considerable nutritional disease. The consumption of meat, milk, and vegetables was officially described as "negligible."

*Ceylon*: Nutritional diseases were rife. Every year large numbers of the older children died from multiple nutritional deficiency.

*Hongkong*: Malnutrition, tuberculosis, dysentery, malaria, and beri-beri prevalent.

*The New Hebrides*: Yaws and malaria widely prevalent.

*India*: "Of all the disabilities from which the masses in India suffer malnutrition is perhaps the chief. . . . Malnutrition is the most far-reaching of the causes of diseases in India."

"20.5 out of a total death-rate of 26.7 per thousand of the population in 1926, were accounted for by cholera, small-pox, plague, 'fevers,' dysentery and diarrhoea—nearly all of which may be considered to fall under the heading of 'diseases of poverty,' and most of which may be considered to be preventable."

". . . the present peasantry of Bengal are in a very large proportion taking to a dietary on which even rats could not live for more than five weeks."

Illiterate, impoverished, and dying from diseases of 'malnutrition'—that was how the people in colonies fared under the 'enlightened rule' of the imperialist powers.

Apologists for the various imperialist powers did not often deny these facts. Indeed, they were obliged to admit that such conditions did exist, since official compilers of statistics themselves dug up these facts. What these apologists attempted was to clear the various colonial governments of responsibility for the poverty and misery of the people they ruled.

Some said that the subject peoples were uncivilized and were much worse off before being conquered than afterward. It can be historically proved that such an argument in most cases was as full of holes as a sieve.

That the people of the Far East were highly advanced in

art and culture has been accepted by scholars all over the world, and needs no retelling here. The collections of Eastern art treasures in the big museums of the Western world, translations of Eastern classics in the European languages, a visit to the remains of ancient cities and temples and the historic buildings and places of worship that still exist intact would convince anyone of the remarkable achievements of the Far Eastern people.

Less known, however, is the cultural background of the African people.

In the vast continent of Africa, before its conquest by European powers, there existed a great variety of political systems and cultures. There were small, autonomous political tribes, stable kingdoms, and great empires including famous cultural centers. Within the well-developed kingdoms and empires law and order prevailed and trade was highly developed.

"They developed bodies of tradition adapted to the natural settings in which they found themselves, technological skills and economic systems to provide for their physical needs, social and political institutions to regulate relationships within the group, and forms of religious and artistic expression to cope with the Unknown and unknowable and to satisfy their non-material needs."

In North Africa, the Empire of Ghana was contemporaneous with the late Roman Empire. Its glories persisted through the first half of the eleventh century. A flourishing export trade in gold, skins, ivory, kola nuts, gums, honey, wheat, and cotton contributed to the prosperity of the people. In what later became French Africa, there rose the great Melle or Mandingo Empire. The celebrated traveler Ibn Batuta visited Melle in 1352 and glowingly described the Melle culture and civilization. He found, on festival days, armour-bearers bringing to the sultan "quivers of gold and silver, swords ornamented with gold and with golden scabbards, gold and silver lances, and crystal maces." "Their women are of surpassing beauty," Ibn Batuta recorded, "and are shown more respect than the men." About



the people Batuta observed that "The Negroes possess some admirable qualities. They are seldom unjust and have a greater abhorrence of injustice than any other people." Ibn Batuta summed up his observations by stating that "one has the impression that Mandingo was a real state whose organization and civilization could be compared with those of the Musselman kingdoms or indeed the Christian kingdoms of the same epoch."

The states of the western Sudan had many of the same characteristics as the feudal institutions of Europe in the Middle Ages: Local chiefs became vassals of powerful kings and, in time of war, had to supply fixed contingents of armed forces. Also as in Europe, the ambitions of these feudal African lords often resulted in internal conflicts leading to the dissolution of great kingdoms and empires.

Next to that of Egypt, African civilization reached its height in the empire of the Songhay in the sixteenth century. Under Askia the Great, a Negro ruler of extraordinary ability, the Songhay Empire was the equal of any contemporary European or Asian state. The traveler Leo the African, who visited the Songhay in 1507, was deeply impressed by the prosperity and the sound administrative system of the Songhay Empire. Askia the Great recruited a professional army from among the slaves and prisoners of war, freeing the peasants from the feudalistic practice of periodic military service so that they could devote their full time to the cultivation of the land. He made of Gao, Walata, Timbuktu and Tenne great intellectual centers, to which even renowned writers came from great distance to complete their studies. At the University of Sankoré, thousands of students studied law, literature, grammar, geography, and surgery.

Leo the African described the Songhay Empire, thus:

Corne, cattle, milke, and butter this region yieldeth in great abundance; but salt is verie scarce here; for it is brought hither by land from Tegaza, which is five hundred miles distant. When I my selfe was here, I saw one camel's loade of salt sold for 80 ducates. The rich King of Tombuto hath many plates and

sceptres of gold, some whereof weigh 1300 pounds; and he keeps a magnificent and well-furnished court. . . . Here are great store of doctors, judges, priests, and other learned men, that are bountifully maintained at the king's cost and charges. And hither are brought divers manuscripts or written bookes out of Berbarie, which are sold for more money than any other merchandize.

Side by side with the development of great kingdoms and empires, the Africans developed a high degree of artistic skill. In pottery and weaving of cloth, in the manufacture of bronze objects and gold and silver jewelry of intricate and delightful patterns, and in the plastic arts, the Africans displayed great originality and superb craftsmanship. Among the most artistic bronzes of Benin, the famous bronze head of a Negress now rests in the British Museum.

In Ashanti, in the west coast of Africa, love of the artistic was so prevalent among the ordinary people that even objects of everyday use were beautified by some artistic touch. "There is hardly any object capable of artistic treatment," writes Robert Rattray, "which is not made the medium for some ornamental design which gives aesthetic delight to the African's mind and eye; such as stools, spoons, combs, wooden plates, calabashes, doors, sticks, staves of office, canoes, *wari* boards, knives, mortars, drums, ivory tusks, pots, pipes, weights and scales, metal work of every description, walls of temples and dwellings, and textiles of every kind. Even the tools and appliances used to obtain these effects, the forge itself, the shuttle, the mesher used for making nets, are ornamental, being decorated with artistic effects, which, however crude, are never vulgar and inartistic."<sup>73</sup> When asked why they went to all the trouble of decorating what might be called machines, the African answered simply: "One likes to look at nice things, even while working."

Tireless propaganda by Western conquerors has led the rest of the world to believe that the Africans are an inferior people who must be slowly and painstakingly guided in the path of self-government. Yet, considering the fact that for long periods the Africans were isolated from the main currents of world

civilization, their accomplishments before their conquest by Europeans were the more remarkable. Maurice Delafosse, after intensive research, came to the following conclusion:

When peoples placed under such conditions have been able, with only their own resources, to organize States like those whose history I have tried to retrace here; to constitute and maintain centers of study like Timbuktu, for example; to produce statesmen like the *mansa* Gongo-Mussa or the *askia* Mohammed, or even conquerors like Ousman-dan-Fodio or El-Hadj Omar, savants and scholars who have succeeded without the aid of dictionaries or of any sort of vehicular language to gain a sufficient command of Arabic in order to understand it at sight and write it correctly; to form languages whose suppleness, richness and precision astonish all those who study them, languages which could, by the simple, normal play of their morphological laws and without foreign interpolations, furnish the necessary instrument to those who speak them, if these people should happen to make in one day a forward leap of fifteen or twenty centuries; to invent completely, as was done about a hundred years ago by the Vai of the Grain Coast and more recently by the Bamoun of the Cameroons, a perfectly viable system of writing, it must indeed be admitted that these peoples do not merit treatment as inferiors from the intellectual point of view.<sup>74</sup>

Before they were conquered by the imperialist powers, the colonial people were primarily farmers, as they remained after they lost their freedom. Their economic, social, and political systems might be broadly termed feudal. There were, indeed, many similarities between Central and Western Europe in the Middle Ages and the countries of Asia and Africa. But there were also some vital differences, and only by understanding some of these differences would it be possible to decide whether the Asians and the Africans were better or worse off when they were free.

In countries like India, Indonesia, and the African territories, the kings and emperors did not have the power to alienate the land of the farmer. Unlike the peasant of the Middle Ages in Europe, the farmers in the Far East and Africa were free

men. The unit of society was the self-sufficient and self-governing little village. In India, land belonged to the community, and the elected representatives of the community parceled out the land to the farming families according to their size. In Africa, land belonged to God, and the first families to settle on the land, after making proper offerings to the deity, considered that they had obtained the right to whatever they could produce by their labor on the land. The village council had the authority to periodically redistribute the land for cultivation according to the increase or decrease in the size of the families living in the village, or to settle newcomers on land lying fallow. Since no one had title to the land itself, no one could sell it or mortgage it.

The professional people in these village communities, the blacksmith, the goldsmith, the carpenter, potter, priest, and teacher, were all supported by the community as a whole. There was seldom any occasion to use metal or other such forms of exchange. The villagers paid a portion of the produce from the land as tax to the ruler, the quantity varying according to the amount produced. Of the English farmer in the Middle Ages, Pope Innocent III wrote: "The serf serves; he is terrified with threats, wearied by corvées, afflicted with blows, despoiled of his possessions; for, if he possesses nought he is compelled to earn; and if he possesses anything he is compelled to have it not; the lord's fault is the serf's punishment; the serf's fault is the lord's excuse for preying on him . . . O extreme condition of bondage! Nature brought freemen to birth but fortune hath made bondmen. The serf must needs suffer, and no man is suffered to feel for him, he is compelled to mourn, and no man is permitted to mourn with him. He is not his own man, but no man is his." This could not be said of the farmers of the Far East and Africa.

In those countries of the Far East and Africa where handicraft industry was highly developed, flourishing cities arose as trade centers. Artisans formed organizations akin to the craft

guilds of Europe. Traveling merchants from many parts of the world came to these cities in search of famous local products.

Tavernier, journeying through India in the seventeenth century, observed that "even in the smallest villages rice, flour, butter, milk, beans and other vegetables, sugar and other sweet-meats, dry and liquid, can be procured in abundance." Manouchi, the Venetian, and Bernier, the French traveler, also wrote glowingly of the prosperity of the people of India in the seventeenth century. With regard to Africa, Armattoe has stated that "Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, West Africa had a more solid politico-social organization, attained a greater degree of internal cohesion and was more conscious of the social function of science than Europe."

Consulting all available data, one would be obliged to admit that the colonial people in general fared better before they were conquered by the imperialist powers. This would not necessarily mean that they were living in any golden age or utopia; it would only mean that, judged on the basis of a pre-capitalist economy, their standard of living was relatively higher than that of contemporary Europe. Living in self-sufficient little villages imposed definite limitations to the degree of prosperity any villager could achieve; but, within those limitations, the villagers had a certain amount of security that they lost when they lost their freedom. The wealth that was accumulated in the cities undoubtedly belonged only to the few, but it remained in the country instead of being transferred to the land of an alien conqueror.

The most common boast of all imperialist powers was that they had rescued the colonial countries from anarchy and established "law and order," and were maintaining peaceful conditions, thereby giving the colonial people an opportunity to progress through their own efforts. If anyone were tactless enough to point out that progress in the colonies has been painfully slow and singularly halting, at best, government

officials attributed that to some deficiency in the people, and insisted that the administration's task was only to "maintain law and order."

What was the nature of these laws, and what kind of order was maintained, that the imperialist governments felt they could boast of them?

To begin with, it would be well to remember that, in the days of mercantilism, colonies were purely and simply sources of plunder. No serious attempt was made either in India or in Indonesia by the British and the Dutch to shoulder the burden of government over the subject people. Those who went to the colonies to serve as administrators were imbued only with the idea of returning home as "nabobs" in the shortest possible time. A successful colonial in those days was one who not only helped increase the profits of the European trading companies by fair means or foul, but also managed to secure a fortune for himself by equally fair means or foul.

It was after the Industrial Revolution, and especially after foreign fields of capital investment became necessary, that the imperialist governments began to pay serious attention to colonial administration. For the proper exploitation of the natural resources of a colony, and for the utilization of the colonial market to dispose of surplus goods, industrialists and manufacturers in the metropolitan countries were obliged to demand an end to the old system of plunder and departure. Capital investment required stability and order in the colonies.

Thus it was that in the nineteenth century colonial administration was everywhere systematized, so the methodical exploitation of the countries and the people could drive ahead. The function of the colonial administration became the establishment and maintenance of conditions under which the industrialists, manufacturers, and investors of capital from the imperialist countries could secure the utmost profit. As Professor Rupert Emerson has pointed out: "It is the [colonial] government's role to shape an appropriate system of law and order and to provide the essential facilities of life, if possible

out of the revenues of the dependency concerned, while it is the role of private enterprise to make the assumed profitability of imperialism a reality.”<sup>75</sup> This was how “law and order” was brought to the colonies.

To be brutally frank, colonial governments enacted laws, when necessary, to ensure a supply of cheap labor for foreign enterprises in the colonies; to keep labor docile, to prevent the growth of trade unions, and, where unions were organized despite severe repression, to put legal obstacles in the path of their functioning; to keep the people as a whole submissive and to legalize oppression and terrorism when they became articulate in their protest; to give judicial sanction to punitive measures when nationalist movements among the subject people became militant; to prevent the colonial people from developing their own enterprises that might threaten the security of the imperialist vested interests; to maintain an inferior status for the colonial people in every aspect of their lives; to gag the native press, and to sanction violations of ordinary civil liberties.

Volumes could be written to illustrate how “law and order” was used consciously as a tool of imperialist exploitation. The following are but a few samples, taken at random.

The pass laws, and hut and head tax laws in Africa, and laws governing contract labor in Indonesia have already been described. In South Africa, the Native Service Contract Act of 1932 literally transformed the African farm laborer, working for European landowners, into a slave. By this Act, an African labor tenant had to secure a written permit from the owner of the farm where he worked in order to look for employment elsewhere. Violators of this law suffered corporal punishment, and, since the contract entered into by an African was binding on his children without their consent, the penal sanctions were applicable to his family as well. Even more offensive was the provision in the Act legalizing verbal contracts between landlord and tenant, while the African had to have written permission from the landlord before he could safely leave.

How even-handed justice was in Africa was shown by the fact that there was no death penalty for the murder of an African by a white man. Selwyn James, in *South of the Congo*, wrote about a case before the South African Supreme Court involving a white man and an African woman charged with "illicit intercourse." On the grounds of insufficient evidence the white man was acquitted, but on the same evidence the woman was found guilty and sentenced to a year in jail.

In Africa, the imperialist powers not only legalized exploitation and oppression, but they also violated some of the basic laws governing the lives of those they conquered. As has been noted, according to African custom, which had the force of law, land belonged to God, and the tribal chief was the custodian of the land on behalf of the tribe. To the African, the tribe consisted of the dead and the unborn as well as those that were living. The burial places of the dead were of especial sanctity to the tribe, for the dead were looked upon as tenants of the places where they lay buried, and members of the tribe were wont to go there to solicit the advice of their ancestors. By expropriating the tribal land, the European conquerors violated a fundamental law of African life. As Leonard Barnes put it: "To evict members of a tribe from the lands of their fathers is thus not merely to deprive them of their customary livelihood, but to excommunicate them from their church, to isolate them from the only intimate spiritual influences they know . . . to undermine the whole social fabric that supports them."<sup>78</sup>

When the demand for rigid segregation of the South Africans collided with the desire for cheap labor, it sometimes produced cruel absurdities. For example, the whites were glad to employ African women as domestic servants at ridiculously low wages. These servants lived in one-room ramshackle huts, known as *kiyas*, in the back yards of the European houses; but if the husbands, compelled to live in segregated "locations," were found visiting their wives at night, they were arrested on the charge of "trespassing."



The Dutch in Indonesia took legal precautions against trade union activities by Indonesian labor. Those who were considered by the government "to have roused the cause of labour strikes by means of speech, writing or drawing" were made liable to a maximum fine of \$50 or five years' imprisonment. A supplement to this Act also provided the maximum penalty for "directly, or indirectly, inciting a strike."

In the colonies where nationalist movements grew strong and militant, the imperialist governments were obliged to tolerate trade unions. But whenever the trade unions threatened to function with some effectiveness, the governments found excuses to arrest the labor leaders by bringing their activities within the scope of the elastic sedition laws. The laws covering seditious activities became all-embracing weapons in the hands of the colonial administrators. Under these laws, hundreds of thousands of leaders of the colonial people were jailed or exiled in India, Indo-China, British Malaya, Indonesia, the West Indies, and other colonies.

The Indian Penal Code, including its many Amendments, was the crowning glory of imperialist administration of colonies. Sec. 4 (1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, for example, read as follows:

Whoever with intent to harass any public servant in the discharge of his duties or to cause him to terminate his services or fail in his duties, refuses to deal with, whether by supplying goods to, or otherwise, or let on reasonable rent a house usually let for hire, or land not being cultivated land to, or to render any customary service to such public servant or any member of his family, on the terms at which such things would be done in the ordinary course, or withholds from such person or his family such medical services as he would ordinarily render, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or to a fine which may extend to 500 rupees, or both.

And Sec. 7 read:

(a) Whoever with intent to cause any person to abstain from or to do any act which such person has a right to do, or to ab-

stain from doing, obstructs or uses violence to or intimidates such person or any member of his family or person in his employ, or loiters at or near a place where such person or member or employed person resides or works or carries on business or happens to be or persistently follows him from place to place or interferes with any property owned or used by him or deprives him in the use thereof or

(b) loiters or does any similar act at or near the place where a person carries on business, in such a way and with intent that any person may thereby be deterred from entering or approaching or dealing at such place

Shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to 500 rupees, or with both.

Extraordinary and unqualified powers were given to the police in India, and the people had no redress against them. Such police powers, in fact, were generally true of most colonies. The interpretation of such terms as "loiter," "pursue," "follow," etc., were left to the discretion of the police. An Indian official sarcastically recommended that the above amendments should be amended again by adding the following words:

Whoever stares at a public servant or a servant of such public servant, whoever talks unkindly to a public servant, whoever cracks a joke with him, whoever fails to invite him to dinner when others are invited, shall be guilty of having committed an offense and shall be liable to imprisonment of either description.

In civilized countries everyone is innocent unless proved guilty; in India, as in most colonies, the accused had to clear himself. It was not surprising that, to the Indians, British Raj was synonymous with Police Raj.

Racial discrimination based on the idea of white supremacy was the keynote in legal procedure in most of the colonies. Separate courts were set up for the trial of whites and colonials, and the scales of justice were heavily loaded in favor of the whites. Even China suffered from this—and China, after all, was not a full-fledged colony. In all the "treaty ports," "settlements" and "concessions," such as Hankow, Tientsin, and

Shanghai, foreigners carried on business under their own laws, with their own government officials and police force, although the fiction of Chinese "sovereignty" was maintained. Throughout China, citizens of the imperialist countries were outside the jurisdiction of Chinese law. They could be tried only by one of their own officials. But the Chinese were subject to arrest by the white police. A most blatant example of the spirit of white supremacy was found by John Gunther in a Shanghai park displaying the sign, "No dogs or Chinese allowed."

Direct or indirect legal gags on the public press owned by colonials existed in most colonies. And the stronger the nationalist movement, the more stringent were the laws and the stricter the enforcement of these laws. In India, beginning with the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, harsher laws governing the Indian press were enacted from 1910 on, until the Press Law of 1931 was enlarged and incorporated in the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1932.

The Act of 1932 frankly stated that its purpose was "the better control of the press." It had power over newspapers, news sheets, and printed and mimeographed leaflets. It conferred upon the local administrators the right to demand the deposit of security by the publishers, and to confiscate the deposit if, in the opinion of the administrators, the publisher had violated any law governing the press. Among the various items of offenses included in the Act were the following: To bring into hatred or contempt His Majesty or the Government established by law in British India, or the administration of justice, or any class or section of His Majesty's subjects, or excite disaffection toward His Majesty or the Government; to induce public servants to resign office or to do any act or to forbear or delay any act connected with the exercise of his public functions; to promote feelings of hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects [this has been used against trade unionists. K.G.]; to prejudice recruiting for the police or army or training or administration. All the items of offense were given a sweeping character by investing the local official

with powers to interpret the law and to decide when the law was being violated.

Sir Lawrence Jenkins of the Calcutta High Court characterized the earlier, milder version of the Press Act thus:

The provisions of Sec. 4 are very comprehensive, and its language is as wide as human ingenuity could make it. Indeed, it appears to me to embrace the whole range of varying degrees of assurance from certainty on the one side to the very limits of impossibility on the other. It is difficult to see to what lengths the operation of this section might not plausibly be extended by an ingenious mind. They would certainly extend to writings that may even command approval. An attack on that degraded section of the public which lives in the misery and shame of others would come within this widespread net: the praise of a class might not be free from risk. Much that is regarded as standard literature might undoubtedly be caught.

Despite this judgment, the Act was enlarged even more and made more drastic.

Colonial empires were acquired not in fits of absentmindedness but with an eye to profit. It was only natural that imperialist governments would facilitate business ventures by their own people, and place obstacles in the path of business ventures by the colonials themselves. Only in the colonies where nationalist movements grew strong were the bars let down a bit for native enterprises.

Many ways were devised to prevent the colonial people from developing their own industries. In some colonies governments simply withheld licenses from the colonials wishing to enter the field of modern industry. In other colonies the banks, all controlled from abroad, refused to deal with the native entrepreneur. For example, in India it was a well known fact that the large banks, all British, discriminated against the Indians. In a Minute appended to the External Capital Committee's Report, T. C. Goswami wrote:

I should like to express the common belief—for which I know there is good foundation in actual facts—that racial and political discrimination is made in the matter of credit, and

that Indians usually do not receive in matters of credit the treatment that their assets entitle them to, while on the other hand, British business men have frequently been allowed larger credit than what on ordinary business principles they ought to have got.

In the constitutional reforms handed the Indians in 1937, the British government inserted proper "safeguards" to protect British interests from possible Indian competition. During the second world war, Britain prevented the establishment of Indian shipbuilding, automobile, and aircraft factories.

Copious examples of favoritism shown to European enterprises by the imperialist governments could be furnished by Africa. In the British Crown Colony of Kenya, for example, African farmers were "discouraged from growing coffee . . . and even bribed to report planting by their more rebellious fellows, heavy license fees were demanded before permission was granted to grow other crops. . . ." <sup>77</sup> On the other hand, a benevolent administration lavished protective duties, preferential railway rates, subsidies, and export bounties on the white farm owners. "Between 1931 and 1939 the white farmers received £200,000 in direct loans, with repayment almost openly regarded as improbable and academic." <sup>78</sup> In 1942-43, the white farmers received £150,000 in direct subsidies, while African farmers received nothing. To discourage the production of maize by Africans, native growers were paid a price much lower than that paid for maize grown by Europeans.

The picture in Indonesia was not very different. In the game of world politics the Dutch government was gradually forced to make some economic concessions to other western powers; but the door was opened only slightly, and Indonesians remained rigidly barred. "Always the Dutch companies were favored in concessions, leases, licenses, and the other devices of control. . . . There is no doubt that the powerful businessmen's associations of the Indies were close to the administration, and thus in a position to protect and develop their own interests. This business-in-government pattern made Holland

one of the richest countries in the world by keeping Dutch companies virtually free from foreign competition in Indonesia. Unfortunately, it also operated as a brake on all liberalistic tendencies in native policy, which had to make way against constant and strong opposition from the vested—and really vested—business interests.”<sup>79</sup>

Even without these obstacles, industrial enterprises started by colonial people themselves were doomed to failure because they were in no position to compete with the vastly greater capital resources of the Western industrialists.

Even a casual survey of imperialist rule in colonies would blow the argument to pieces that without the civilizing presence of the Europeans to maintain law and order, chaos and anarchy would ensue. The order that the rulers attempted to maintain was one forced from above; it was continuously being disturbed by major and minor rebellions by the subjugated people.

The United States, after taking over the Philippines from Spain, waged a war against the Filipinos for nearly three years to establish order. Even after order was established, periodic agrarian revolts had to be put down by force. How the American marines were kept busy suppressing revolts and restoring order in the Western Hemisphere has already been described.

The same story holds true for Africa. The Germans brought order in their colony of Southwest Africa by crushing the revolt of the Herreros in 1904–07 and slaughtering 60 thousand members of the tribe. When the Maji-Maji people revolted in Tanganyika, the German government restored order by killing more than 100 thousand rebels. The French kept their army busy maintaining order in the face of the El-Hadj-Omar, Samory, and Riff rebellions. Spain was constantly at war against the Moroccans. Periodic uprisings had to be suppressed in South Africa, Nyasaland, the Belgian Congo, the Cameroons, and the Sudan.

The Indonesians failed to appreciate the blessings of the order the Dutch had established, and so it had to be reestablished at intervals by the persuasive use of bullets and bayo-

nets. Although the Atjehnese opposition was finally liquidated by 1908, minor revolts plagued the Dutch as late as 1941. A series of rebellions in Java and Sumatra in 1926-27 and a mutiny by Indonesian seamen in 1931 were violently suppressed by the Dutch government.

In the British Empire, where the subject people were said to enjoy the blessings of Pax Britannica, repression and shooting to maintain order was endemic. In 1932, a large-scale rebellion in Burma required the services of the British Army; in 1938 another uprising in Rangoon was put down after 150 Burmese were killed and over 500 injured. Shortly before the second world war, "disturbances" had to be quelled by the extensive use of force in Northern Rhodesia, South Africa, Zanzibar, Mauritius, Tanganyika, St. Lucia, Trinidad, Barbados, Jamaica, the Gold Coast, and Cyprus. The British Army scarcely had any rest in Palestine. In India, the government faced periodic peasant revolts, and resorted to machine guns even against unarmed demonstrators. The massacre at Amritsar was one of the most brutal examples of the way Pax Britannica functioned: In 1919, troops under General Dyer, blocking the single exit to an enclosure where unarmed men, women, and children had peaceably gathered, fired 1,600 rounds of ammunition into the crowd. Hundreds were killed, and the wounded were not allowed medical attention until the following day. This drastic method was used to warn plotters of future revolts.

There were other ways by which the imperialist powers kept order in the colonies. Where the population was mixed, the administrators shrewdly played upon their differences to pit one group against another, keeping the country in a continuous turmoil, in the name of order. By bribing or jailing the leaders, or by deliberately setting up rival organizations, many peasant, trade union, and nationalist movements were weakened or disorganized. In short, empires were maintained the way they were acquired: by trickery and violence.

Law and order did not mean the establishment of a harmonious relationship between the people and the government and

among the colonial people themselves. Justice did not always accompany law, nor peace go with order. It could hardly be otherwise, because both the devising of the laws and the maintenance of order were prompted by the needs of the imperialist countries rather than the needs of the conquered people.

This does not mean that, in the colonies, all laws were unjust or that the order being maintained was totally valueless. But, by and large, the laws that were socially beneficial to the people were not essentially gifts of the imperialist governments; they had been in existence in the colonies, sometimes in a crude form, to be sure, before the people lost their freedom. Whatever progress they made stemmed only indirectly from the order that was maintained.

At bottom, it was a question of whether the establishment of law and order should be the sole function of a government.

In all civilized countries, at least theoretically, the function of government is considered to be promotion of the general welfare of the people. The American Declaration of Independence put it pithily: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." How did the governments in the colonies stack up against this definition?

To begin with, the last qualification was violated by every colonial government: None of them derived "their just powers from the consent of the governed." The colonial people, without exception, were thoroughly and unreservedly dissatisfied with alien rule. It was not easy to ignore this point; yet every colonial government tried all conceivable methods, often stooping unspeakably low, to find *some* colonials who would consent to their rule. In many cases they succeeded to an extent where they could boast before the world that some of their best friends were colonials.

It was indeed not very difficult for the rulers to gain the sup-



port of some colonials in countries where people were abysmally poor and where there was a fierce struggle for existence. Relatively well paid government jobs, or even ill paid jobs that guaranteed a minimum of security, sufficed to bind a few to the chariot wheel of imperialism.

Allowing archaic feudal potentates to continue to exploit their people under protection from the imperialist powers secured the allegiance of a horde of princes, emirs, pashas, and land barons. A host of middlemen, who scrabbled for the crumbs from the tables of the foreign industrialists and manufacturers, became stout supporters of empire. These were the typical followers of whose support the imperialist governments boasted.

What about Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness? Did the colonial governments make the lives of their subjects secure? Did they miraculously bring greater liberty to the people after depriving them of their freedom? Did they create wider opportunities for education and fruitful employment, without which there can be no happiness? What does the evidence show with regard to these normal functionings of a civilized government?

All the evidence shows that life in the colonies, for the colonial people, was anything but secure. Average life expectancy remained tragically low, the infant mortality rate remained appallingly high, and diseases resulting from starvation, and loss of life from "malnutrition"—a favorite euphemism for starvation used by committees of inquiry—continued unabated. The lives of the colonial people were not even secure from attack by the armed forces of the governments themselves.

It might be contended that, even though they were conquered by foreign powers, the people in colonies gained in return civil liberties far greater than they enjoyed before. Yet it is an incontrovertible fact that in most colonies the people lost even the traditional individual and collective liberties they had before conquest. To gain even a modicum of civil liberties, they had to pry them from the unwilling fists of the conquerors.

Only rarely did a colonial government establish a system of free and compulsory education for its subjects. In most colonies there was neither. Even in such colonies as the Philippines, poverty forced children to become wage earners, thereby preventing them from continuing their studies beyond the rudimentary stage. Imperialist powers often bewailed the fact that the overwhelming rate of illiteracy in their colonies retarded the growth of self-government; but they did nothing to overcome this widespread illiteracy. When prodded for a better alibi, they replied lamely that it was a matter of time, that even in the imperialist countries themselves free and compulsory education and the resultant high rate of literacy was, after all, of comparatively recent origin. They have never clearly answered the question, however, of how it happened that the imperialist powers did not sooner bestow upon their colonies this priceless gift of free and compulsory education, since they were so loudly solicitous of the welfare of their subjects.

Even where some primary educational facilities were available, the system of education was generally simplified and narrowed down so that the ordinary colonial would not question his lot. In British Malaya, in a discussion of educational policy in the Legislative Council on October 28, 1929, the Malaya member, Mohamed Unus bin Abdullah, was bold enough to remark: "In the fewest possible words, the Malaya boy is told, 'You have been trained to remain at the bottom, and there you must always remain.' Why, I ask, waste so much time to attain this end when without any vernacular school, and without any special effort, the Malaya boy could himself accomplish this feat?"

When colonial people spoke of the government creating opportunities for employment, they did not mean the kind of jobs artificially created by government projects in times of depression in the imperialist countries. They insisted it was the duty of truly representative governments to aid their people in establishing a modern economy. The colonial governments, on the contrary, suppressed any efforts by their subjects to modern-

ize their economy, forced them to live under medieval conditions, and took no steps whatever to raise their standard of living. It was no argument to say, even if it were true, that the people were no better off before they were conquered. Even supposing that, before they were conquered by the Dutch, all the Indonesians were illiterate and the average income was nil; it would only mean that three hundred years of Dutch rule had resulted in a rise in literacy to a little over 5 per cent and an increase in average income to the munificent sum of 15 dollars a year. What an example of good government! The imperialist governments could partially justify their aggression only if they could present tangible evidence of the material betterment of the people they had forced to accept their rule. Their failure to do so was the greatest indictment against them, and entitled their subjects to find ways and means to overthrow them.

On the basis of their record, the imperialist powers could scarcely justify their administration of colonies. They measured up to no standard of civilized government. It was hardly to their credit that they constantly harped on the theme of rescuing the colonial people from even worse native governments. People in colonies would have been equally justified in overthrowing their native governments when such governments became an obstacle to progress. In fact, the imperialist governments, in many instances, deliberately preserved reactionary native rulers as satellites, against the will of the people.

While they overemphasized their proud record of maintaining law and order in the colonies, imperialist powers also cited measures they had taken to lead their subject people to self-government. They pointed out that in colonies such as India, Burma, and the Philippines, periodic constitutional reforms had led to the establishment of elected bodies somewhat similar to the Parliaments and Congresses in the Western countries. They also listed the various civil service and similar positions that were gradually being filled by colonials themselves. These facts were presented as clear evidence of the desire of the colonial administrations to train the people in self-rule, carefully

leading the colonials step by step up to the degree of civilization necessary to govern themselves. It was admitted that the process was slow, but it was contended that the granting of full democratic rights must await universal literacy in the colonies. On the surface, such arguments looked watertight, but a glance beneath the surface showed them to be full of holes.

Partially elected or elected bodies did exist in some colonies. What was left unsaid, however, was that these concessions had been made, not voluntarily, but only after nationalist movements grew threatening enough to require pacification. Even then, these concessions were craftily worded in such a manner that the elected bodies became mere debating societies. They had little power of legislation, and no power whatsoever to tamper with the prevailing economy of their countries. The foreign viceroys and governors and high commissioners held complete veto powers over any and all activities of these elected bodies, as well as extraordinary powers to step in with special legislation whenever necessary to protect imperialist interests. Power over the police, the military forces, finance, and foreign policy remained in the hands of the real rulers. Those colonials who were taken into the administration really functioned as a convenient screen, behind which the imperialist powers continued their exploitation of the colonies. The colonials who composed these elected bodies received experience in criticizing the government, if they dared, but no experience in actual ruling.

Individual colonials who were given administrative posts fared no better. The cards were stacked against their gaining any real experience in democratic government. As part of the imperialist system, they had to follow the rules of a government that was designed for the benefit of the conquerors. As Ralph Bunche put it, in relation to French administration in Africa: "The native is given subaltern positions in the European administration, in which positions, however, he often gains experience, not in the art of self-government, but in the European methods of administering a subject people."

Undoubtedly many elected and appointed colonials were patriotic people who tried hard to lessen the misery of their countrymen. For that matter, there were many European government officials who made valiant efforts to better the condition of the people they ruled. But, even at best, their efforts were futile. They had no power to change the land tenure system, to foster indigenous industries, to eliminate the parasitic princes and land barons; in short, they had no power to attack the basic problems of a colonial economy.

It was curious to hear imperialists bemoan their inability to grant full democratic rights to illiterate colonials when they did little or nothing to promote literacy among their subjects. With an air of stating an incontrovertible fact, the ruling governments said that education must precede democracy in the colonies; yet the same governments made education impossible by withholding the finances and legislation necessary to establish free and compulsory education. The argument concerning American Negroes related by Barrows Dunham is equally applicable to the argument concerning colonial people:

Our imaginary antagonist says that he is democratically fond of Negroes, but that he does not think they should vote until they have been educated. Very well, let us admire his democratic fondness. But the Negroes will not be adequately educated until they have adequate access to schools. They will not have adequate access to schools until there are adequate legislative appropriations. There will be no adequate legislative appropriations until legislators are elected who will really represent the disfranchised. Few such legislators will be elected until the disfranchised are allowed to vote. Thus our friend, in postponing the suffrage, postpones also the education which is supposed to qualify voters for the suffrage. The change he says he desires is one which he has rendered impossible, and cynics may surmise that he never really desired it.<sup>80</sup>

Did imperialism, therefore, accomplish nothing constructive in the colonies? What about the irrigation projects, the road-building, and the railroads that colonial administrators were so proud of?

No one would deny that some constructive work was done in a few colonies by the rulers. These were not, however, undertaken primarily for the benefit of the people.

The British government always pointed with great satisfaction to its irrigation works in northern India. It was conveniently forgotten that irrigation had always been essential to cultivation in that region; that the former Indian rulers considered the upkeep of the artificial water supply as one of their main tasks; and that the British government allowed the old irrigation works to fall into disrepair and neglected replacing them for a long time. And, of course, it was not considered crickety to point out that the irrigation projects were business ventures that yielded anywhere from 5 to 8 per cent profit. What the Indian peasant needed was a cheap water supply, subsidized by the government—if necessary, without profit. What he got was a water supply system that was often so costly he could not afford to use it.

Roads and railroads were also built, not to accommodate the residents, but with military and export needs in mind. In the case of Malaya and Indonesia, Professor Rupert Emerson pointed out that "the primary purpose in the original construction of a modern system of roads" in these countries was "the need of establishing means by which an effective control can be exercised over tribes and centers of population which lie removed from the first point or points of occupation." The benefits which the general public realized from such projects were accidental by-products. After the military needs were taken care of, Professor Emerson stated, "attention is shifted to the building of roads, railways, and ports which will efficiently serve . . . the cities and the European plantation and mining areas." The native population was, of course, never barred from using any modern roads that happened to pass by their quarters; "but the normal spectacle is that the natives trudge along barefooted carrying their burdens while trucks carry European produce and private cars carry European passengers." Railroad systems were constructed in Malaya for the

benefit of the foreign plantation and mine owners, "and in the trains the luxurious first-class compartments are assumed to be for the white man while the lower races crowd onto the hard seats of the third-class accommodations."<sup>81</sup>

Needless to say, the colonial people would have welcomed the irrigation projects and the transportation and communications systems built by the rulers in the colonies, if they had been utilized for the benefit of the country; their complaints were directed against the primary purpose and the misuse of what should have been public utilities. These would be of real benefit to the people only when they were put to the service of the people—but that required a change in the political status of the colonies.

A change in their political status—that was the conclusion the colonial people inevitably came to, after trying every other way of material progress, without any success: they could better themselves only by changing their economy, and they could change their economy only by seizing political power. Even in the most advanced colonies the colonials were rigidly barred from economic power; even in the most advanced colonies whatever gains the people made in so-called "constitutional advance" were without substance, and even these were gained only through long, desperate struggle.

By 1939, they had come to realize "the tragic truth that if subject peoples must rely upon the persuasive power of their arts and virtues in the struggle for freedom from imperialist domination, their hopes may be deferred until doomsday: imperialism has established itself by force and it is normally the persuasive power of force to which it is most responsive."<sup>82</sup>

The second world war was to furnish startling proof of this hypothesis.

## ❀ Chapter V ❀

# COLONIES IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

AS IS NOW WELL KNOWN, in the second world war, the colonial countries collapsed like houses of cards before the advancing forces of the Axis powers. The imperialist powers on the side of the United Nations had often proclaimed in the past that they were the unfailing protectors of the colonial people and without them their colonies would be defenseless. When the test came, they failed miserably to live up to their proclamations.

The collapse of the colonial countries was not unexpected. Liberals had anticipated such a calamity and sounded a warning. In 1940, Edgar Snow in his book *Battle for Asia* foresaw the course that Japan was to follow soon afterward. Colonial leaders sensed the coming disaster but the imperialist governments ignored it.

Within an incredibly short time the Japanese sliced through the defenses of the Philippines, the entire Malaya Archipelago, and reached the borders of India by way of Burma. Corregidor held out heroically for a while, but failed to save the Philippines. The much vaunted "impregnable naval base" of Singapore never even saw action. The British Navy, by which Britannia had ruled the waves, was smashed by dive bombers and turned out to have been strong only *against* the colonials and not for their defense. In French colonial Africa, the French leaders betrayed the people; the only official there who showed opposition to Nazism was a Negro—Felix Eboué, Governor of Chad province.

Many have berated the imperialist powers for not mobiliz-



ing the colonial people in their own defense. Yet there was nothing complex about the behavior of the colonial governments. As long as they remained colonial governments, no amount of criticism, coaxing or cajolery could have changed their behavior. These governments knew as well as their critics that the war against the Axis powers could be successfully waged only with the full moral and material mobilization of the colonial people; but they also knew that colonials mobilized well enough to fight the Axis successfully would later be able to fight equally successfully for freedom from their imperialist masters. That was the one eventuality that the colonial governments wished to avoid at all costs. That was of greater concern to them than the defense of the colonies against the Axis. They counted upon the enormous resources and manpower of the United States and the Soviet Union to eventually restore their colonies to them, even if they lost them in the initial stages of the war.

The extreme crisis of the war sharpened all the inherent characteristics of imperialism and brought to the surface the latent possibilities of the colonial people themselves.

Despite the war, the British, French, and Dutch ruling class and merchants continued to utilize their colonies in the traditional manner. In Indonesia, Malaya, and Burma, the governments actually rejected the support of the more progressive elements of the people and, even at the last moment, denied them arms to fight in self-defense. In India, which could have been developed as a gigantic arsenal for the Allies, only a feeble attempt was later made to build a few light industries, even though an American Commission conducted a special survey and made recommendations for greater industrial development for war purposes. Indians by the millions volunteered for the army, but less than a quarter of them were accepted. The excuse was that the supply of arms was insufficient to equip any larger number. Even some of those accepted were made to drill throughout the war with wooden batons instead of guns.

The colonies did contribute, as stated before, in the tradi-

tional manner, that is, money—sometimes extracted from them by thinly disguised coercion. They also supplied raw materials in great quantity, labor at their customary few cents a day, and foodstuffs—even when millions of their people were dying of starvation.

Little attempt was made by the fast-retreating imperialist forces to employ the scorched earth policy in Indonesia, Malaya, and Burma. Even in retreat the white Europeans enforced racial discrimination in the evacuation of the white people from territory about to fall to the enemy, while leaving the native population to shift for itself.

The debacle in other colonies prodded the British government into a half-hearted attempt to reach an understanding with the Indian leaders. The overtures were coldly received, because the British were unwilling to make any forthright declaration of independence for India after the war, nor to set up a genuine wartime government representative of all political parties. Such great Indian leaders of proven anti-fascist sentiment as Nehru and Azad spent the war years in jail, incommunicado.

No change in colonial policy took place in the course of the war. Lofty pronouncements were, indeed, made from time to time by Churchill and the Queen of the Netherlands, couched in well-considered generalities, proposing greater "*self-government*" of the colonies after the war, but no promises were made for the *independence* of any colonial people. The single exception to this was the case of the Philippines, whose freedom had been promised for July 4, 1946. What that freedom really amounted to will be discussed later. During the war, only one ray of hope pierced the gloom in the colonies—the Atlantic Charter, proclaiming the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they would live when the war ended. But even that faint hope was dashed when Churchill denied that the Charter applied to British colonies.

No one thought of making even vague promises of self-government to the British African colonies. The white plantation owners took advantage of the wartime emergency to

intensify their exploitation of African labor, often with government backing. Using the excuse that increased production was necessary for the successful prosecution of the war, forced labor and the labor of children were utilized to increase the profits of the white plantation owners.

Among the colonial people themselves, the war produced mixed reactions. The more progressive and politically alert leaders had recognized the menace of fascism long before the war began, and were alarmed by the manner in which the Western capitalist democracies, often quite brazenly, were nursing the fascist powers to maturity. These leaders saw imperialism extended to encompass even greater exploitation of colonial peoples in the form of fascism, and they foresaw the probability of a world conflict engulfing the colonial countries as well. As early as 1937, Jawaharlal Nehru, uneasily watching the war in Spain, wrote: "I saw this rising, with its background of German and Italian assistance, developing into a European or even a world conflict. India was bound to be drawn into this. . . . The challenge of fascism and Nazi-ism was in essence the challenge of imperialism. They were twin brothers, with this variation, that imperialism functioned abroad in colonies and dependencies while fascism and Nazi-ism functioned in the same way in the home country also. If freedom was to be established in the world, not only fascism and Nazi-ism had to go, but imperialism had to be completely liquidated."<sup>83</sup>

The hunger for colonies and the desire for a redivision of colonial possessions continued unabated between the two world wars. Germany, Italy, and Japan were greedy for a share of the colonies that were the foundation of the power, prosperity, and prestige of such imperialist countries as Britain, France, and Holland. Even smaller countries were demanding to be cut into the game.

Hitler began by demanding the return of Germany's former colonies. Italy demanded "those frontier ratifications which are necessary to give a better arrangement of Europe and the colonies." On July 31, 1936, the Foreign Office in Warsaw put

forward Poland's claim for colonies in South America and South Africa. On May 11, 1929, the Norwegian paper *Nationen* proposed that the League of Nations should grant Norway a mandate in East Africa. Even little Denmark demanded at least access to the natural resources in the colonial territories belonging to other powers.

Action was not long in following verbal demands: Japan took forcible possession of Manchuria and Italy robbed Ethiopia of her freedom. People in the older colonial countries stood helplessly by while their masters did nothing to prevent these brazen acts of aggression. Britain generously offered some of the colonial possessions of lesser powers, such as Portugal, in an attempt to appease the fascist aggressors. The chief strategy of the imperialist powers was to shift Hitler's intuition toward the East and to persuade the fascists to fatten at the expense of the Soviet Union.

When Britain became involved in the war, the diehard imperialists were taken aback by what they considered Germany's ingratitude when Hitler lunged westward instead of to the East. A minor classic of imperialist hypocrisy of that period was written by a former British colonial official with the blessings of another British colonial official. This little book entitled *The British Case* written by Lord Lloyd, a former Governor of Bombay, and unqualifiedly endorsed in an introduction by Viscount Halifax, former Viceroy of India, is replete with professions of "Christain belief and practice," dogmatic assertions of the superiority of the Western Europeans over all other people of the world, and frank approval of fascism. It breathes an air of almost fawning admiration for Hitler, and the author performs incredible acrobatics to justify Hitler's brutal aggressions up to the time when Britain became involved in the war. Toward the end of the book the former Governor of Bombay reluctantly berates Hitler because he believed that the Fuehrer had become an apostate by not living up to his reputation as the "leader of the Anti-Communist bloc." This

book was a miniature masterpiece revealing the mentality of British colonial officialdom in the year 1940.

When war broke out in Europe in September, 1939, progressive, forward-looking colonial leaders were placed in a dilemma. Many of them, like Nehru, realized that in all probability the war would become worldwide. As the war spread and the European democracies suffered defeat after defeat at the hands of Germany, these leaders were not tempted to say, "We told you so." For they found small consolation in the prospect of transference from the rule of imperialism to the rule of fascism. Knowing well what alien rule meant, many of them showed a commendable breadth of vision by sympathizing with the plight of the people of the imperialist countries. They expressed this sincerely in spite of the fact that, as unarmed colonials over whom the battle was being fought, they were helpless to offer any effective aid in the war against the fascist aggressors.

Thus, as early as September 14, 1939, the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, guided largely by Jawaharlal Nehru, stated in part:

If the war is to defend the status quo, imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privilege, then India can have nothing to do with it. If, however, the issue is democracy, then India is intensely interested in it. The Committee are convinced that the interests of Indian democracy do not conflict with the interests of British democracy or of world democracy. . . .

If Great Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end imperialism in her own possessions, establish full democracy in India, and the Indian people must have the right of self-determination. . . . A free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defense against aggression.

But the imperialist powers had no intention of relaxing their grip on their colonies. Indian leaders and many Burmese leaders spent most of the war years in jail, and many Indonesian and Indo-Chinese leaders remained in exile even when

their countries fell to the Japanese with lamentably little opposition offered by their mighty rulers.

Among the handful of colonials who had profited from collaboration with their imperialist masters, there were quite a few who found little difficulty in collaborating with their new Japanese masters. Most of them were shrewd enough to know the significant part they played in any imperialist scheme, and were sure of a safe place for themselves even if the rule of the former masters were restored. In this, as events later demonstrated, they were not far from being correct.

The average colonial remained a passive spectator of the war being waged with him as a prize—until the war engulfed his own country. Among those who lived in colonies territorially untouched by the war, there were many who undoubtedly savored the bittersweet satisfaction of seeing the European imperialists humbled by an Asian imperialist power.

There were three countries—besides the colonies directly invaded and conquered by the Axis—for which the colonial people had unbounded sympathy during the war. China, as a semi-colonial country struggling for freedom, had the moral and—to the degree possible—the material support of all colonial people. They were favorably disposed toward the United States, because of the American promise of independence to the Philippines and, especially, because of the enlightened approach to the colonial problem manifested in the speeches of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie. And for the Soviet Union the colonial people had sincere admiration and sympathy; for they knew of the giant strides the previously backward people of Soviet Asia had made since the Revolution, politically, economically, and culturally.

From the viewpoint of the future of the colonial people, however, the most significant things occurred in the colonies that passed into the hands of the Japanese. With the fall of their previous rulers, the people of Indonesia, Indo-China and Burma were temporarily free from past restraints. Since Japan could not fully consolidate her power as long as the war went

on, these colonial people had the opportunity to organize guerilla forces and thereby were able not only to contribute to their liberation from Japan but to offer powerful resistance to the return of their former masters. In the Philippines, where the people had already been to some extent taken into the armed forces of the United States, there was a similar development of guerilla and national resistance forces.

Japan had assiduously propagated the idea among the colonial people of Asia that the invasion was in reality a movement to "liberate" the colonies from white domination. After they had conquered these territories, the Japanese had to make some gestures of fulfilling their promise of "liberation." Obviously, such fulfillment could not be more than a gesture, for the Japanese wanted not to strengthen the nationalist movements in the conquered countries, but only to keep the populace docile. Therefore, the gestures never went beyond the setting up of puppet governments subservient to the conquerors. Even where the colonials were at first taken in by such maneuvers, it was soon apparent to them that there had only been a change of masters and no change in their own status.

In Indonesia, a strong underground resistance movement developed, and in April, 1943, anti-Japanese uprisings broke out. Two Indonesian leaders, Soekarno and Hatta, who were in exile when their country fell to the Japanese, entered the Japanese-sponsored government as a strategy to aid the underground resistance movement. Popular bitterness against Japan grew so intense that, besides the activities of the resistance movement, the Indonesians who had been taken into the Japanese Army staged five major revolts during 1943-45.

In Indo-China there was a resistance movement against the Japanese even as fascist ideas were infiltrating the political life of France. The leaders of Indo-Chinese resistance had a deep hatred of fascism and were even farsighted enough to submerge the struggle against the French in the hope of persuading them to stand abreast with the Indo-Chinese in opposing Japan. Several political parties of Indo-China formed a coali-

tion on this basis, and they were even joined by a few enlightened French officials. But the Vichy mentality was discernible in the French government even before Germany invaded France, and, on the very day that war broke out in Europe, the leaders of the Indo-Chinese Democratic National Front were put in prison.

Nevertheless, for twelve months after Admiral Decoux surrendered Indo-China to the Japanese Army, there were serious uprisings in many parts of the country. Since they were unorganized and received no support from the neighboring British colonial government, they were eventually crushed by the Vichy-French and Japanese troops.

Slowly and painfully the resistance movement reorganized underground. Composed at first of the Annam Nationalist Party, the Indo-Chinese Communist Party, the Association of Young Revolutionaries, and various groups of peasants, workers, and soldiers, it gradually drew into its ranks all nationalist elements as well as anti-fascist French and Chinese nationals. The organization called itself Viet Minh, and stood for the establishment of an independent Indo-China under the country's ancient name of Viet Nam. During the latter part of the war, the Viet Minh grew in strength to the degree that the Japanese were forced to brush aside the puppet French officials and establish direct military control over Indo-China.

In Burma the situation was more complicated. Complacent in the belief in their innate superiority, which precluded the possibility of any Asians successfully challenging their authority, the British before the war had allowed thinly disguised Japanese propaganda to circulate among the Burmese. Many nationalists became convinced that the Japanese could be used to oust the British, and that, in the ensuing confusion of a prolonged battle, the Burmese in turn could seize power and oust the Japanese. When the Japanese arrived in Burma, they were accompanied by a Burmese Independence Army under the young nationalist Aung San.

But things did not work out as the deluded nationalists had hoped. Since the British defense collapsed in short order, there



was no prolonged period of confusion. The Japanese forces remained strong enough to maintain some sort of control, and certain Burmese, such as Ba Maw and Thakin Mya, were as eager to collaborate with the Japanese as they had been in the past to collaborate with the British. With their help, the Japanese succeeded in setting up a puppet government. Aung San's Burmese Independence Army was demobilized.

During the hasty exit of the British, many of the imprisoned nationalist leaders escaped and began organizing an underground resistance movement. By 1943, the Burmese Anti-Fascist Organization had grown strong enough to enlist the support of the general public, as well as to draw into its ranks a section of Aung San's army. Eventually, all the patriotic forces were drawn into the Anti-Fascist Organization, and they were joined by Aung San. Out of this amalgamation of forces rose the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, a broad, united organization representing an overwhelming majority of the Burmese.

The pattern of events in the Philippines, after the Japanese conquest, by and large was similar to what took place in the other colonial countries conquered by Japan. The Japanese army received support from most of the Filipino landlords and the propertied classes. With their help, the "liberators" set up a puppet government. To combat these elements, resistance movements sprang up in various parts of the islands. The more prominent of the resistance forces were the Free Panay Guerrillas, the Blue Eagle Guerillas, the Cabite Guerillas, and the United States Army Forces of the Far East (USAFFE) guerrillas. This last was composed of former members of the Philippine Army as well as some members of a pre-Japanese political party, and was given official recognition by American headquarters. Many of these organizations were led by American officers left behind in the retreat.

The first organized, as well as the most significant and effective, guerilla organization was the Hukbalahap, functioning in the provinces of Central Luzon, the rice bowl of the

Philippines, where the peasant movement had always been strong. The name Hukbalahap was derived from a contraction of the Tagalog words *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon*, meaning People's Anti-Japanese Army. This resistance movement was conceived in December, 1941, and got fresh impetus when, in March, 1942, the American forces were still desperately clinging to Bataan. With the labor leader Luis Taruc and a Socialist, Casto Alejandrino, in command, the Hukbalahap was a genuinely popular organization made up of labor unions, peasant groups, intellectuals, and middle class elements, religious groups, members of the Chinese colony, the Socialist and Communist Parties, and the Civil Liberties Union. Among its leading members were the Socialist, Pedro Abad Santos, who lost his life in the Luzon jungle in January, 1945; the Peasant Union leader, Juan Feleo; the well-known scientist, Dr. Vicente Lava; and the labor leader, Mariano Balgos.

What set the Hukbalahap apart from the other guerilla forces was its leaders' awareness of the economic and political implications inherent in the war they were waging. Having undergone the triple oppression of feudalistic landlords, American imperialism, and Japanese fascism, they were conscious of the identical principle underlying these three forms of exploitation. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Hukbalahap fought for economic reforms and democratic rights with the same intensity as it did against the Japanese; in fact, their fighting power increased in proportion to the economic and political reforms they set in motion even as the fighting was going on.

In order that what happened in the Philippines after Japan's surrender may be clearly understood, a few more facts about the activities of the Hukbalahap are set down here.

The Huks began their operations virtually unarmed. Their first equipment consisted of arms discarded in the battlefields by the Japanese and the Americans. Later they collected more efficient weapons by raiding Japanese outposts and warehouses, and disarming Japanese troops and puppet police. Still later

they manufactured rifles and explosives in small quantities. By February, 1945, the Hukbalahap had an army of 20,000 men and women and a reserve force of 50,000; they had fought over 1,200 engagements with Japanese and puppet troops, and had killed some 25,000 of them. The Huks were not without official recognition during the war. Early in their activities they established contact with Lt. Col. Claude Thorpe, who was in command of guerilla activities in the Luzon area. On June 2, 1942, Thorpe wrote to the Hukbalahap: "I desire to congratulate you on your past accomplishments and on your present . . . effort." General Walter Kreuger of the American Sixth Army described the Huks as "one of the best fighting units I have ever known."

The Hukbalahap put into effect fundamental economic and political reforms whenever they had an opportunity to do so, and this was frequently the case, because the land barons usually retreated to the safety of Manila, and also because the Huks were able to maintain a large section of their territory completely free of the Japanese. In these sections the Hukbalahap confiscated the land belonging to landlords who collaborated with the Japanese, and distributed it among the peasant cultivators. Landlords who did not side with the Japanese were allowed to retain their land, on condition that the larger share of the crops went to the peasants who tilled the soil. In place of the pre-war dictatorial regime of the landlords, the Hukbalahap organized democratic local self-government in every little village. Popularly elected village councils administered justice, operated schools for children, and provided for health and sanitation. Though only rudimentary, these first steps in self-government touched and transformed the daily lives of the rural communities. The ordinary Filipino peasant and factory hand and clerk in the Hukbalahap territory had a practical demonstration of what he was fighting for; it inspired him to fight harder, to increase the material benefits and political advancement he had secured even at the outset of the resistance.

The reaction of the imperialist powers to the rise of resistance forces in their former colonies was quite characteristic.

Since Holland herself had lost her own independence early in the war, there was little question of the Dutch government-in-exile sending any aid to the Indonesian underground movement. But even in words spoken over the radio, Queen Wilhelmina was parsimonious in her promises to the Indonesians about their future. The most dazzling picture she could paint for Indonesia at the end of the war was a vague autonomous status in a Netherlands Commonwealth.

The Free French under de Gaulle did no better by the Indo-Chinese. They made no attempt to establish contact with the Indo-Chinese guerillas, nor did they have any more reassuring words for Indo-China's future than the Dutch had for Indonesia's future. In July, 1944, all that de Gaulle would say was: "We believe in a federation of all the territories over which the French flag flies. . . . The native peoples in the former colonies are, of course, in various stages of evolution more or less advanced. The policy will be for all these territories to attain a degree of self-government within the federation. This applies in particular to Indo-China."

When Malaya was being overrun by the Japanese, there was a public display of breast-beating in the London press. *The London Daily Express*, for example, on January 15, 1942, condemned the government's failure to mobilize the people in their own defense, describing the colonial administrators and businessmen as "a pack of whiskey-swilling planters and military birds of passage." Three days after the fall of Singapore the *Times* special correspondent ruefully admitted that "The Government had no roots in the life of the people of the country." But as the war went on, the air waves carried nothing more inspiring for the Malaysians than descriptions of the heroic fight being put up by Britain. This was inspiring for the British people, who had something precious to maintain and to recover, but to the colonials, who could put two and two together, illiterate though they were, "maintenance" meant the

preservation of the imperialist status quo, "recovery" meant the restoration of lost colonies to their previous owners. As far as establishing contact with the Malayan underground, only in the spring of 1945 did the military command in the Far East parachute a few British—not Asian—liaison officers over Malayan territory.

To the Burmese, the British government eventually offered a promissory note, due, to some extent, no doubt, to the presence of American forces and some Chinese troops under General Stilwell in this theater of war. The White Paper on Burma, published in London on May 17, 1945, outlined a plan to help Burma attain "full self-government within the British Commonwealth" through a series of reforms involving several years. This plan, which left the final decision up to the British Parliament, was hedged in with so many restrictions and qualifications that newspapers in neighboring India unanimously denounced it as "a cruel piece of casuistry." Even the pro-government *Times of India* admitted that the plan was hardly one "to excite any great enthusiasm in Burma."

A sharp conflict arose between the British and American commands regarding military strategy to be followed in the recovery of Burma. General Joseph Stilwell was mainly concerned with the defeat of the Japanese in Burma in the shortest possible time. The British, on the other hand, sure of the eventual defeat of Japan, were less concerned with the time element than with political considerations. Hence, the British representatives in India put every conceivable obstacle in the path of Stilwell's progress toward Burma. When the story of this dissension leaked out in the press, the British military command was obliged to establish contact with the Burmese resistance movement; yet, even then, the liaison officers often immobilized the guerilla fighters and enjoined caution rather than boldness.

The conflict over Burma gave the first intimation of what British tactics would be in the recovery of the colonies lost to Japan. The French and the Dutch obviously concurred in this

strategy. The idea was to defeat Japan decisively in territories outside of the colonies; to build up meanwhile a strong concentration of imperialist forces in the neighborhood of these colonies; and to march into them at the moment of least Japanese resistance. By using this device, the former rulers could pose as liberators, and at the same time have powerful forces on hand to crush any attempts by the colonials to secure genuine liberation from foreign rule.

There was every indication that greed for empire was one of the chief ingredients of the second world war. One of the frankest statements to this effect appeared in the September 16, 1944 issue of *The Economist* of London. An editorial on the subject of Britain's Far Eastern stake pointed out that "for Britain, and in similar measure for France and Holland, the Far East is a necessity of greatness and wealth. . . . The conception of the [Japanese] Co-Prosperity Sphere was an inconvenience to the United States. To Britain, to the Netherlands and to France, it was a death sentence passed on their fundamental way of life." The editorial then bluntly continued: ". . . the American prejudice against 'imperialism'—British, French, or Dutch—has led many of the post-war planners to assume that the old sovereignties will not be re-established in Southeast Asia and that some form of international control, or the transfer of the imperium to local peoples, will take the place of the old authority exercised by the Western nations. Since this attitude exists and is even backed by some of the most widely distributed American journals and newspapers, it is time that the future intentions of the British, the French, and the Dutch were frankly and fully explained. Since none of them has any intention of abandoning its colonial empire, but on the contrary regards the restoration of Malaya to the British, the East Indies to the Dutch, and French Indo-China to the French as an essential part of the destruction of Japan's Co-Prosperity Sphere, it would be inviting the worst sort of misunderstanding, and even accusations of bad faith, if the

three nations allowed any doubt on the matter to continue in the mind of their American ally."

During the war, the imperialist powers not only manifested their desire to hold on to what they owned and to repossess what they had lost, but the stronger of them attempted to take advantage of the weaker ones when they were unable to defend themselves. France's plight revived the old dream of the British imperialists for unrivaled control of the Middle East which had remained dormant in their hearts between the two world wars. During the first world war, it will be recalled, Britain failed in her attempt to gain control of the Middle East by parceling it out among the members of Sherif Hussein's family. In the course of the second world war, the attempt took the form of promoting the "independence" of Syria and Lebanon at the expense of France, and encouraging the formation of an Arab federation headed by feudal Arab lords susceptible to manipulation by Britain.

Before the war, German and Italian agents were thick as flies in the Middle East. After France fell, the French mandates of Syria and Lebanon, under the Vichy government, became hotbeds of Nazi intrigue. In 1941, British and Free French forces booted out the Nazis and took possession of the twin mandated states. There was a good deal of agitation for independence by Syrian and Lebanese nationalists, and even more intrigue and jockeying for position between the French and the British, resulting in two bloody affairs within a short space of time. Even before V-E Day, Britain, backed by the United States, out-maneuvered the French and secured recognition for Syria and Lebanon as sovereign states. For the time being, Britain acknowledged France's special interests in the two states. Exactly a week after V-E Day, the French quietly landed troops at Beirut, and attempted to impose an unpalatable treaty on the Syrians and the Lebanese. It was an unsubtle *putsch*, doomed to failure. There was violence, resulting in heavy casualties. Supported by the American Minister, the

British, standing by with their guns and tanks, swept in to restore order. To all intents and purposes, that was the end of French influence in the Middle East.

Britain's interest in an Arab federation was indicated as early as 1941, when Anthony Eden announced in the House of Commons that the British government would look favorably upon a plan for unity of the Arab states. Wheels began to turn in the Middle East, slowly and cautiously, because intense jealousies among the Arab potentates had to be reconciled. In January, 1943, Eden again declared that "His Majesty's Government would view with sympathy any movement among Arabs to promote their economic, cultural or political unity. But clearly the initiative in any scheme would have to come from the Arabs themselves." The wheels turned faster, and by the end of 1944 the Arab League was born and yelling lustily, giving Britain the fond hope that she had a potent weapon to serve her at some future time.

As V-J Day approached, it was evident the imperialist powers had not undergone a change of heart toward the colonies. On the contrary, there was every indication that they were more than ever determined to hang on grimly to the substance, if not the erstwhile form, of colonial exploitation.

Britain prepared for the end of the war by gathering heavy concentrations of forces adjacent to areas where post-war eruptions might require their services. The largest troop concentration was in India, to keep India, Burma, and Malaya under control and, as it later turned out, to lend a helping hand to Holland and France in their colonies nearby. Despite the fact that the Jews in Palestine had contributed far more than their share in men and material to the winning of the war, the British increased their forces there in anticipation of difficulties.

Holland and, to a slightly lesser extent, France were obliged to leave the fate of their Far Eastern colonies in the hands of Britain. The Dutch government had very few troops and no ships immediately available to transport them in, and the



greatly weakened French had their hands full looking after their African colonies.

President Roosevelt's death, before the war was over, dimmed the prospects for colonial freedom. The administration's liberal outlook toward colonial countries seemed to pass into the grave with him. Talk about an American Century and American Destiny that was more or less whispered during Roosevelt's lifetime, grew louder and more insistent after his death. American fingers tightened their grip on innumerable Pacific island bases. Standard Oil of New Jersey and Socony Vacuum had already secured a monopoly of oil and other mineral resources in Saudi Arabia, and Washington began to take a proprietary interest in the Middle East. Although the promise of independence for the Philippines on July 4, 1946 was reiterated by the American government, liaison officers became antagonistic toward the Hukbalahap because of their program of economic and political change. And the American administration's attitude toward China swung decidedly in favor of the extreme reactionaries.

Before the United States entered the war, some attempts were made to co-ordinate the Communist and Kuomintang struggle against the Japanese, but even then Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang were more interested in weakening the Communists than in fighting the Japanese. After Pearl Harbor, the Kuomintang decided to let the American forces carry the burden of the war in the Far East, counting upon the vastly superior resources of the United States to eventually prevail against Japan.

During the last three and a half years of the war, the Kuomintang army did comparatively little fighting against the Japanese. Even when they did engage the enemy, their efforts usually lacked efficiency. The corrupt Kuomintang bureaucracy was wallowing in graft and mercilessly exploiting the Chinese peasantry under its rule. The troops were poorly fed, poorly trained, and poorly led; in desperation, they often raided the villages near which they were stationed for food, thereby rous-

ing the hostility of the villagers. Very little of the military supplies sent to the Kuomintang by the United States was issued to the troops, for Chiang Kai-shek was hoarding these supplies for future use against the Communists. All during this period, Chiang employed his best equipped and most efficient troops in containing the Chinese Red Army within the northern border region.

The Red Army did most of the fighting in China against the Japanese during the latter half of the war. Their record was the more brilliant because of the incredible handicaps under which they were fighting. They received none of the American supplies sent to aid all Chinese who were fighting the Japanese, since the disposal of these supplies was in the hands of Chiang Kai-shek. The Red Army supplemented its crude weapons with whatever they found on the battlefields or could capture in raids on Japanese munition depots, or take from prisoners.

The Communist armies had several great assets that the Kuomintang armies lacked: they were better led, their morale was higher, and they had the enthusiastic support of the people in their region and of the people in the sections they liberated from the Japanese. This was the result of the economic and political reforms the Communists inaugurated in their region, even in the course of the war. The Chinese Red armies were drawn from and fighting in the midst of people who had already secured agrarian reforms and democratic rights; they had already laid a foundation upon which they knew they could build a better life for themselves after they had won victory from the enemy; they had already tasted the new democracy that made resistance to the Japanese worth while for them.

"The central economic feature of the New Democracy," the Communist leader Mao Tse-tung explained to Gunther Stein of the *Christian Science Monitor*, "is the agrarian revolution. This holds good even during the present period when the fight against Japan is our main task. For our peasantry is the chief object of exploitation—not only of Chinese reactionaries but

also of the Japanese imperialists in the occupied territories. Only the introduction of the New Democracy in our war regions has enabled us from the beginning to resist the Japanese as successfully as we do, because of its reforms in the interest of the peasant masses who constitute the very basis of our war effort.”<sup>84</sup>

Although more attempts were made during the war to bring the Kuomintang and the Communist parties together, they never succeeded, primarily because Chiang Kai-shek and his close associates were afraid to let the powerful Red Army expand into any more provinces, and were even more interested in weakening the Communists than in strengthening China's war effort. After the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the United States threw its weight solidly behind Chiang, though a half-hearted effort to bring the two parties together continued for some time longer. As the end of the war neared, Chiang Kai-shek prepared to launch an elaborate campaign against the Chinese Red Army.

Four months before the end of the war, the United Nations held its first session in San Francisco, to draw up the United Nations' Charter. Statesmen assembled there made eloquent speeches extolling peace and good will among men. When the question of the trusteeship of colonies came up, however, the veneer of humanitarianism cloaking the representatives of the imperialist governments peeled a little more with each succeeding session.

Back in March, 1945, the influential London weekly, *The Economist*, had come out with the idea that Britain and the United States might, after the war, reluctantly take on new colonial burdens. *The Economist* graciously conceded the Japanese mandated islands to the United States, reserving the Italian colonies in East Africa for Britain. Professing to look at the "colonial issue" realistically, the eminent journal said: "If the international discussions on the colonial question could concentrate on how to improve the mandate principle instead

of taking the form of impracticable proposals on the one side and flat refusals on the other, some concrete results might be achieved."

At the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, Russian Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov startled most of the delegates by recommending that colonial people placed under the Trusteeship Council should have the opportunity to achieve "ultimate independence." Immediately there was vigorous protest from the representatives of the imperialist powers. Even the milder recommendation of the Chinese delegate, Wellington Koo, "to promote development toward independence or self-government as may be appropriate to the circumstances of each area" was greeted with shrill cries of objection, especially from the British delegate; only after a prolonged fight, a variation of the Chinese recommendation was incorporated in the trusteeship charter.

Thomas F. Reynolds reported in the newspaper *PM* on May 18: "Lord Cranborne, British Dominion secretary, spoke at length, *insisting that some areas will not want independence, some never may be qualified.* [Soviet delegate] Rostchin contested that viewpoint. If the total organization is to be dedicated to the principles of self-determination and equality of peoples, he argued, its organ on trusteeships certainly should spell out the words of the pledge, even if they turn out to be as brutally frank as the word 'independence.'" [Author's italics.]

After all the nauseating cant about the imperialist powers gently leading backward colonials, step by step, to freedom, it was refreshing to hear the true voice of imperialism speaking through Lord Cranborne. The Dominion secretary quite naturally failed to realize that, if his characterization of some colonies were true, what a horrible indictment of imperialism that would be! For to say that some colonies would not desire independence is to confess that imperialism is capable of crushing the spirit of the colonials to the degree of killing the fundamental, instinctive desire for freedom they share with all men. Admitting, for the sake of the argument, that Lord Cranborne

was sincere in his belief, if such was the case, his very sincerity was eloquent proof of how dangerously deep the roots of Western supremacy had grown in the minds of the imperialists.

Colonial people all over the world were keenly watching the proceedings of the San Francisco conference, and the debate on trusteeship strengthened the resolve slowly taking shape in their minds.

The atmosphere was charged in the colonies when the war against Japan ended in August, 1945. Nationalist organizations emerged in the territory that had been overrun by the Japanese, armed and experienced in guerilla fighting. The prestige of the Western powers had sunk low; Japan's quick victories had proved to the colonial people that the Western powers were not invincible. Those colonials who fought in the underground resistance movements and those who were members of the armed forces of the imperialist powers learned that they were as good fighters as anyone else. Those living in colonies not invaded by the Axis powers gained new confidence and inspiration from the stories of guerilla fighting against the Japanese that reached them. Even though the majority of the colonial people were not permitted any direct participation in the war, in one way or another it brought about a greater and more militant urge for freedom among them. The imperialist powers faced a new challenge, as the atom bomb precipitated Japan's surrender. Their response to the new situation in the colonies was quite characteristic.

## ❀ Chapter VI ❀

### COLONIES AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

**W**HEN JAPAN surrendered on August 15, 1945, it was proclaimed that the second world war had come to an end. This was only partly true. The war against the Axis powers had come to an end; but the imperialist element of the war was not over. Instead of a contest between imperialist powers, it became a war between the colonials and their imperialist rulers.

Two days after the Japanese capitulation, the Indonesian leaders Achmed Soekarno and Mohammed Hatta, in the name of the Indonesian people, declared the independence of their country. On August 19, 1945, the following proclamation was published over the signature of the two leaders:

We, the Indonesian people, hereby declare our independence. Independence is the right of every nation. Any form of subjugation being contrary to humanity upon this world must be abolished.

Our struggle has reached a stage of glory, in which the Indonesian people are led to the gate of the Free Indonesian State which is independent, united, just and prosperous.

With the blessing of God Almighty and led by the highest ideals of a free national life the Indonesian people do hereby for ever declare their lasting freedom.

In the Republic of Indonesia the people are sovereign.

The Republic is for righteous and moral humanity, for the unity of Indonesia, and for democracy.

The first Indonesian government, with Soekarno as President, was not fully representative of the people. To democratize the government, a national convention of people representing all sections of Indonesian nationalism was held in October, 1945.

This convention elected a Central National Committee, headed by Sutan Sjahrir. The Central National Committee was vested with parliamentary powers until a People's Congress could be elected by popular mandate. A Working Committee, responsible to the Central National Committee, was elected to conduct the day-to-day administration of the country.

On November 13, 1945, President Soekarno announced that a new Cabinet would be formed, with Sjahrir as Prime Minister. "The Government of Indonesia," Sjahrir declared, "having successfully weathered the storm and stress attendant upon the initial stages of its assumption of power, feels that the time is now ripe for the institution of several necessary measures aimed at democratizing the administrative structure of the country." He thereupon announced a three-point program of his Cabinet:

First, the formation of a Cabinet that would not include anyone who had collaborated with the Japanese;

Second, the holding of elections to the National Assembly, a body to which the Cabinet would be responsible, at an early date;

Third, "in order to stimulate the growth of sound political thinking, the Government of the Republic calls upon the people to organize parties to represent all shades of political opinion in the country. The nuclei of some such parties were in existence before the Japanese occupation and had to remain quiescent during the period of Japanese rule. Both the Dutch and the Japanese were equally hard on Communists and those political parties that stood for complete, untrammelled independence. The Republic of Indonesia will ban no political organization so long as its tenets or actions do not run counter to recognized democratic principles."

Sjahrir, who was one of the leading organizers of the underground resistance movement, emerged as the most prominent figure in Indonesia during the post-war period of struggle for freedom. An avowed socialist, he expressed his views most clearly in a booklet he wrote in November, 1945. The following excerpts from the booklet will give an idea of his political and social outlook.

As long as there is an Anglo-American capitalism and imperialism, we cannot achieve 100% independence, however much we try. Because of this, the fate of the people of Indonesia is bound up with international conditions and developments, and more than any other country, we need a changed basis of society, which means the eradication of world capitalist imperialism. More than any other country we depend upon international conditions. And until the basis of society is changed, and an end is put to capitalist imperialism, the struggle of our people can not be fully satisfied and the independence which we can achieve, even freed fully from the Dutch, will still be nominal independence, similar to that of other small countries under the influence of big capitalist countries. . . . Our popular movement from the beginning of the fight against foreign domination really fought feudal bureaucracy and ultimately the autocracy and fascism of Dutch despotism. . . . Subjectively the social character of our revolution may become clearer and deeper, yet objectively further possibilities depend entirely on the changes occurring in the world. . . . So in setting up the power of our society in our revolution we must never forget that we are taking part in a democratic revolution. The national revolution is only a part of our democratic revolution. Nationalism should not be put foremost, but democracy, in spite of the fact that it is easier to stir racial hatred. Possibly these tactics may succeed for a short while (*vide* successes of Mussolini, Hitler, Franco, Chiang Kai-shek, and others), but for the progress of society such action is always reactionary and inconsistent with the progress and social struggle of the whole world. . . . The State of the Republic of Indonesia which we have created as a means in the revolution of our people must become a means of democratic struggle, cleansed from all traces of Japan and its Fascism. The constitution, which is not yet perfectly democratic, must be replaced by a real democratic constitution which expresses that the foundation of all state organizations is the liberties of the people—freedom of thought, speech, religion, writing, the obtaining of subsistence, the obtaining of education, taking part in the forming and determination of state organizations and state affairs, the right of voting and the right to be chosen in all state organizations. . . . The driving forces at present behind the revolution are the working class and the youth. But while to the latter freedom means freedom from foreign rule,



to the workers it means freedom from foreign rule and the end of their suffering. If the Indonesian people forget this aspect of the battle for freedom, the democratic aspect, and see in freedom only the overthrow of foreign rule, the revolution would degenerate into fascism. . . . It must be led not by "pure" nationalists who reject the democratic content of the revolution, but by revolutionary democrats who understand this content.

There was immediate and overwhelming response to Sjahrir's appeal for the formation of parties. Seven political parties came into existence, including the *Partai Nasional Indonesia*, the Indonesian Socialist Party, the Moslem Party, and the Indonesian Communist Party. The Trade Union Federation and the Indonesian Peasant Front were organized in November, 1945, and a month later 63 delegates representing 20,000 students attended the conference of the East Java Students' Federation.

The second National Convention of the Indonesian leaders met in Djakarta (original name of Batavia) on November 25, 1945. About 100 members, representing the seven political parties, trade and peasant unions, students, and businessmen attended the convention. Included among the members were representatives of the Amboinese, whom the Dutch always claimed as their allies, ten women delegates, four Chinese, and three Eurasians. After a spirited debate, provoked by former collaborators with the Japanese, the convention voted overwhelming support for the Sjahrir cabinet. On March 2, 1946, Sjahrir was authorized to form a new, coalition cabinet, which would be even more broadly representative than the first.

The Dutch government and its allies meanwhile had not been idle. Caught unawares by the suddenness of the Japanese surrender, Dutch authorities in Australia broadcast frenzied orders to the Japanese forces to take over interim command in Indonesia. When they were confronted with the alarming prospect of being repudiated by their former colony, the Dutch imperialists had no compunction in demanding the support of their erstwhile enemies, while at the same time attacking the Indonesian leaders as collaborators with the Japanese! This neat

somersault caused them not the slightest twinge of conscience or sense of embarrassment!

The Southeast Asia Command, headed by Lord Louis Mountbatten, was designated by the Combined (Anglo-American) Chiefs of Staff to execute the surrender terms and to disarm the Japanese forces in Indonesia. Since no Dutch troops were then available, British General Christison arrived in Indonesia with British Empire troops to take over. The leaders of the Indonesian Republic offered to co-operate in the disarming of the Japanese, but they warned they would not tolerate the return of Dutch troops and officials.

For a time after the arrival of the British Mission, there was a brief period of calm. In *Harper's Magazine* of March, 1946, Major Frederick E. Crockett, head of the U.S. Military Mission in Java, wrote an eye-witness account of this period. Major Crockett reported that, though the make-up of the British Mission "smelled suspiciously of a return to the old order," the Indonesian leaders "accepted it with equanimity and awaited results." Fully armed Japanese troops patrolled the streets, and "all Allied personnel were directed never to leave the hotel without an escort of *Kempeitai* police, the nearest Japanese equivalent of the German Gestapo."

Dutch forces and officials poured into Indonesia as fast as they could be transported. General van Oyen arrived on October 3, 1945, and took over command of the Dutch troops. Swaggering Dutch and mercenary Amboinese soldiers terrorized the villagers; they were trigger-happy and shot at people on the slightest provocation; they raided Indonesian homes, and dragged off the occupants without charges or warrants. A battle started between Dutch and British Empire troops, equipped with modern weapons manufactured mostly in America, and the poorly armed Indonesian men, women, and children.

After many months of fighting, the Dutch were obliged to admit that the leaders of the Indonesian Republic had almost universal popular support, and that they had underestimated the strength and the will to freedom of the people. The Dutch gov-

ernment realized that it was not strong enough to defeat the Indonesians without considerable outside aid. Both the government of the United States and the Labor government of Britain preferred to see Dutch sovereignty restored over the islands; but, despite the insistent pleas of the Dutch, the United States was unwilling to go beyond material help, and even that ceased when it became apparent that the Dutch were unable to cope with the military situation in Indonesia. The British government was eventually forced to withdraw most of its aid to the Dutch; they were having trouble in their own colonies, and they were unable to depend on the Indian soldiers brought over to fight the Indonesians, who were deserting the British Army to join the ranks of the Indonesian soldiers.

It was not benevolence, therefore, that forced the Dutch to open negotiations with the Indonesian leaders. After several unsuccessful conferences, Acting Governor-General van Mook cautioned in a broadcast in May, 1946, that "The Indonesia of the future will be something different from the old Netherlands East Indies. We are compelled to revise traditional ideas if we do not wish to be faced with ugly facts." After several proposals and counter-proposals, a compromise draft agreement was initialed by both sides on November 15, 1946, at Linggadjati, in Java.

The salient points of the Linggadjati agreement were as follows: the Netherlands government recognized the government of the Republic of Indonesia "as exercising *de facto* authority over Java, Madura and Sumatra," and agreed that "The areas occupied by Allied or Netherlands forces shall be included gradually, through mutual cooperation, in republican territory," the process to be completed by January 1, 1949; the Netherlands and the Republic were to co-operate "in the rapid formation of a sovereign democratic state on a federal basis to be called the United States of Indonesia;" if the population of any territory decided "by democratic process" not to join the United States of Indonesia, they would be allowed to establish "a special relationship" to the United States of Indonesia

and to the Kingdom of the Netherlands; it was proposed that, to promote their joint interests, the Netherlands, the United States of Indonesia, Surinam, and Curaçao should form a Netherlands-Indonesian Union, with "the King (Queen) of the Netherlands at the head" of the Union; the government of the Republic of Indonesia recognized "the claims of all non-Indonesians to the restoration of their rights and the restitution of their goods as far as they are exercised or to be found in the territory over which it exercises *de facto* authority," and agreed to set up a joint commission to facilitate this restoration and restitution; it was also agreed that "The Netherlands Government and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia shall settle by arbitration any dispute which might arise from this agreement and which cannot be solved by joint consultation in conference between those delegations. In that case a chairman of another nationality with a deciding vote shall be appointed by agreement between the delegations or, if such agreement cannot be reached, by the President of the International Court of Justice."

This agreement evoked a wide variety of conflicting reactions both in the Netherlands and in Indonesia. Dutch reactionaries and the political parties of the Right campaigned against ratification of the agreement on the ground that it conceded too much. Dutch liberals, the Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions and the Netherlands Communist Party approved the agreement, and urged its ratification.

In Indonesia, Sjahrir, the Indonesian Federation of Labor, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, and the Socialist Youth Organization favored approval of the agreement. Opposition came from the leadership of the Moslem Party and the *Partai Nasional Indonesia*.

The Linggadjati agreement was looked upon by both sides as a transitional document. It by no means conceded full independence to Indonesia. On December 10, 1946, the Netherlands Government, while authorizing the Commission General for the Netherlands Indies to sign the document, explained in an accom-

panying Memorandum that the agreement "is not a constitution, but rather a program of principle . . . not a juridical, but a political document. Its incompleteness, even its vagueness—not as an avoidable shortcoming, but as a necessary limitation—follows from its very character." In an interview with the Republican news agency *Antara*, on November 19, 1946, Sjahrir declared that the agreement could be considered "a political achievement by the Indonesians," and added that it "should be regarded as a new phase in our struggle which will be continued." And the Indonesian Federation of Labor considered the agreement as "the first step in the Indonesian struggle for freedom."

While the ratification of the agreement was pending, sporadic fighting continued in Indonesia. The Dutch attempted to prevent Indonesian trade in rubber, copra, spices, and other products. At the end of January, 1947, the Netherlands Commission General and Premier Sutan Sjahrir announced their disagreement over the interpretation of the Linggadjati agreement. The Dutch insisted upon the acceptance of their interpretation, which Sjahrir characterized as virtually amounting to negotiating a new agreement. In the spring of 1947, the Linggadjati agreement had not yet been ratified.

There was nothing obscure about Dutch policy toward Indonesia. In the early part of 1947, they were still stalling for time, in order to consolidate their position in the islands of East Indonesia and Borneo, where the Sjahrir government had no jurisdiction. By such partial control, the Dutch hoped to split and weaken the United States of Indonesia, when the federation came into being. At the same time they were still planning military campaigns in Java and Sumatra. According to a despatch from The Hague sent by David Anderson and printed in the *New York Times* of February 14, 1947, the Dutch were seeking military equipment from the United States "for operations in the Netherland Indies." Anderson reported that, in an interview given before his departure for Java, Lieut. Gen. S. H. Spoor said: "The policy I will follow is that of the late President

Theodore Roosevelt: namely, soft words backed up by a big stick. . . . Our intention is to undertake a series of limited objectives. In this way we hope to eliminate resistance without stirring up trouble over a wide area." The commander of the Dutch forces in Indonesia in two sentences threw more light over Dutch colonial policy than was shed by half a dozen official manifestoes of the Netherlands government.

The Sjahrir government forged ahead with a constructive domestic program, while struggling to maintain the precarious independence. During 1946, with Dutch government restrictions eliminated, trade unions expanded vigorously, and in many cases production was carried on under labor management. Enjoying far greater freedom than ever before, the peasants produced more food and generally raised their standard of living. There was astonishingly little dislocation of business activities. Most significant of all was a ten-year plan to change the character of Indonesian economy, announced in April, 1947, by A. K. Gani, Minister of Economics of the Indonesian Republic.

Aiming to raise the standard of living of the 55 million citizens of the Republic, the program included public ownership of utilities now privately owned, with compensation to their present owners; transfer to the Indonesian government of utilities, industries and estates formerly owned by the Dutch government; state monopoly in the beginning of all export and import trade; return of properties to their former foreign owners—after securing guarantees of higher wages and better social conditions for the workers—as speedily as the Dutch lived up to the spirit of the Linggadjati agreement; labor laws protecting the rights of trade and peasant unions; encouragement of peasants', workers', and merchants' co-operatives and co-operatives run jointly by workers and the state; a state credit system for industry, marketing of agricultural products, and shipping; encouragement of mixed private and public capital companies; increased participation of Indonesians in management and ownership; resettlement in Sumatra of several million persons from densely populated Java; and appointment of foreign

advisers for army, education, finance, customs, agriculture, industry, transport, and public utilities. To finance the ten-year plan, it was announced that the Indonesian government would soon float one foreign and one national loan.

But the Indonesian Republic had no opportunity to put into effect these constructive measures, for, soon after Gani's plans were announced, the Dutch violated the Linggadjati agreement and unleashed a whirlwind military campaign to swiftly wipe out the government of Indonesia. The ill-equipped Indonesian army had little chance against the Dutch forces who were well supplied with modern American weapons.

This treacherous attack by the Dutch inflamed the entire colonial world. Britain and the United States tried hard to prevent Dutch perfidy from being aired in the United Nations. Nevertheless, in the summer of 1947, Australia and India brought up the issue before the Security Council of the UN.

The Dutch protested vehemently that it was a domestic issue of the Netherlands empire, over which the United Nations had no jurisdiction. They started a shameless campaign of character assassination against the Indonesian leaders. In the Security Council debates, the imperialist powers succeeded in blocking any effective action from being taken by the UN to put a brake on Dutch aggression. Eventually Australia, which had jumped to the support of the Indonesians with suspicious alacrity and had assumed the position of their chief spokesman, suddenly presented a milk-and-water resolution with the support of the representative from Kuomintang China. The passage of this resolution, which the *New York Times* conceded to be a victory for the Dutch, brought the conflict in Indonesia no nearer to a solution.

At the end of the war, Britain and India faced each other under circumstances very different from those in the past.

British rule was more thoroughly discredited than ever in the eyes of the Indians. There was unbounded resentment against Britain's treatment of the Indian political leaders,

37,000 of whom languished in jail while the war was going on. The much publicized "efficiency" of British colonial administration failed miserably to meet the test of the food crisis of 1943-44, during which nearly five million Indians died of starvation and many more millions were physically crippled by malnutrition. There was an even greater food shortage after the war, and the British government showed an incredible callousness in its neglect of famine relief. Cost of living rose to dizzy heights, while wages remained low. It was openly predicted that from ten to fifteen million Indians would die of starvation in the course of the first year after the war.

The political situation was no less chaotic than the basic administrative services. With so many thousands of its leaders in jail, the National Congress Party had become demoralized and disorganized during the war. The Moslem League, under its astute and ambitious leader Mohammed Ali Jinnah, made a spectacular increase in its following, and emerged at the end of the war as the spokesman for the overwhelming majority of the Indian Moslems. At a time when the suffering of the people was most intense, Jinnah attributed the plight of the Moslems to Hindu tyranny, and tirelessly plugged for his theory that the Moslems of India, by virtue of their common religion, constituted a nation. He demanded that India be divided into two fully independent territories—one predominantly Moslem and the other predominantly Hindu. *Pakistan*—an independent Moslem territory—became Jinnah's sole preoccupation. He even rejected Gandhi's very democratic suggestion that the question of Pakistan be settled by a plebiscite in the provinces where the Moslems were a majority, and he refused to cooperate with the Congress Party until his territorial demands were met unconditionally.

Shortly before the war ended, Nehru, Azad, and other top leaders of the Congress Party were released from prison by the British. The first task they faced was restoring order in their party, but they had been long out of touch with happenings at



home and abroad, and they felt they must study the world situation before taking any political steps.

There were unmistakable signs of a new militancy among the people. Soon after Japan surrendered, a wave of strikes swept India. The general public launched mass demonstrations in support of the strikers. More significant was the unity displayed by the Hindus and Moslems in the ranks of the demonstrators, despite the government's divide-and-rule policy and Jinnah's ceaseless emphasis on Hindu-Moslem differences. The British government was made aware that nationalist sentiment had also seeped into the ranks of the hitherto mercenary Indian soldiers.

In the November 26, 1945 issue of *Time* magazine, two members of *Time*'s London Bureau predicted "a historic blow-up in India . . . perhaps in late March." Though they hesitated "to predict a revolution or revolt," they agreed that "all evidence certainly points to the same alarming conclusions." *Time* reporters were convinced that "great trouble was in the making." To them it was "highly significant—1) that the British are keeping such large numbers of troops there instead of demobilizing them; and 2) that both sides agree that Russian influence to date is not responsible."

The beginning of 1946 witnessed huge meetings held all over the country, demanding that the British quit India. At all meetings and demonstrations the Congress Party and Moslem League flags flew side by side. In February 5,000 Indian naval workers went on strike, hauled down the Union Jack and raised the Congress Party and Moslem League flags on their ships. This was soon followed by revolts in sections of the Indian army and air force, supported by enthusiastic popular demonstrations, in which members of all political factions participated.

Speaking in the House of Commons on March 15, 1946, Prime Minister Attlee admitted that the spirit of nationalism was no longer confined to Indian civilians, but had "spread to those wonderful soldiers who have done great service in the

war." Shortly thereafter, a British Cabinet Mission, once again headed by Sir Stafford Cripps, arrived in India with proposals for India's future political status.

Briefly, the British proposal contained the following provisions: A Constituent Assembly drawn from the eleven provincial legislatures was to be set up, due consideration being given to proper minority representation; the Indian princes were to be represented by their nominees in the Assembly; the Constituent Assembly was to have no power over the princes, the status of the princes being left to their own choice; the Constituent Assembly was to frame a constitution for a Union of India, with a central government having power only over foreign affairs, defense and communications, all residuary powers being vested in the provinces; "The provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures, and each group could determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common"; pending the formation of a Union of India, the Viceroy was to take into his advisory Council representatives of the major political parties.

The British proposal was criticized from many angles. It was pointed out that the Constituent Assembly was not to be elected democratically by the Indian people as a whole. Members of the provincial Legislative Assemblies were themselves elected by about 11 per cent of the population of British India. Besides which, the 100 million Indians in the princes' territories would have *no* voice in the Constituent Assembly. The Indians had always called for a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise for the whole of India. The British government did not say that the Indians were incapable of electing such a genuinely democratic Constituent Assembly: "The most satisfactory method obviously would be by an election based on adult franchise," the British proposal declared, "but any attempt to introduce such a step now would lead to wholly unacceptable delay in the formation of the new constitution." It was never explained why Britain was suddenly concerned with speed; in fact, the time consumed in negotia-

tions since the proposal was made would have been ample for the election of a Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise.

Besides not being popularly elected, the Constituent Assembly was not to be a sovereign body. It had to function within the framework laid down by the Cabinet Mission, as interpreted by the British home government; it had to operate under British military occupation; and its final decision would not be binding until approved by the British government.

Though it seemingly rejected Jinnah's scheme of *Pakistan*, the British proposal nevertheless divided India, through provincial groupings and the maintenance of princes' territories, into four parts: British India was trisected into a Hindu-majority zone and two Moslem-majority zones, while the princes' states made up a fourth zone. In reality, Britain tacitly conceded Jinnah's demands.

The most serious drawback and anti-democratic feature of the British Labor government's plan was the provision made for the continued functioning of the autocratic Indian princes in a presumably free India. No provision whatever was made in the British proposal for the introduction of democratic principles in the princes' states nor for the voice of the princes' subjects to be heard in the Constituent Assembly.

There was very little enthusiasm for the British proposal among the Congress Party leaders. The June 1, 1946 *News Letter* of the Congress Committee declared that the Cabinet Mission's plan was "not much better than what even Messrs. Churchill and Amery were willing to concede in March 1942. . . . The independence that has been promised is so hedged in with restrictions, that it is a misnomer to call it by that name. . . . In the jungle of restrictions, reservations, safeguards, and the balancing of one interest against another, it is difficult to visualize a clear and complete picture of a free and independent India. The communal and feudal interests have been the main props so far of the British Imperial game in India. To try to maintain them as permanent and effective features of the so-called independent India gives rise to a plausible suspicion that

the British Government are unable to break away from the traditional policy of their predecessors."

Nevertheless, the Congress Party agreed to participate in the Constituent Assembly and enter the Viceroy's advisory Council, euphemistically renamed Interim Government. The excuse given by the Congress Party for so doing was that they intended to use the Constituent Assembly as though it were sovereign, and to use the Viceroy's Council as though it had real power. The Moslem League refused to enter the Constituent Assembly, since the British had not categorically guaranteed *Pakistan*. However, the League later entered the so-called interim government.

Throughout 1946 the Indians remained disorganized and bitter. The conflict sharpened between the Congress Party and the Moslem League, and the Congress Party's acceptance of the British plan, even though conditional, temporarily dampened the militant ardor of the people. Lacking an energetic program, their despair was diverted to internal quarrels. The trade and peasant unions, however, having constructive programs to offer, gained enormously in both prestige and membership.

The Constituent Assembly, minus both the Moslem League and the princes' representatives, met but accomplished little. Uncertainty about the future completely demoralized the administration, producing utter confusion throughout British India. In some of the princes' states there were popular demonstrations for democratic rights, which were ruthlessly suppressed.

On February 20, 1947, Prime Minister Attlee made another statement on India to the House of Commons. He announced that it was the British government's "definite intention to take the necessary steps to effect the transference of power into responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June, 1948." The British government no longer demanded agreement upon a constitution by major Indian political parties and the Indian princes before power was handed over to the Indians. Attlee

declared that if, by June, 1948, the Indian leaders failed to work out a constitution according to the British plan of the previous year, "His Majesty's Government will have to consider to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over on the due date, whether as a whole to some form of central government for British India or in some areas to the existing provincial governments or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people." With regard to the Indian princes, Attlee categorically stated that Britain would in the meantime retain sovereignty over them, arrange new treaties with them if necessary, and, even after June, 1948, "His Majesty's Government do not intend to hand over their powers and obligations under paramountcy to any government of British India."

This statement of the British government created quite a bit of sensation. British and American liberals hailed it as the greatest demonstration of voluntary abdication of power the world had ever seen. Curiously enough, the same liberals were simultaneously accusing the British Labor government of crooked political maneuvering in Greece and Palestine and other areas of the Middle East.

It was, in fact, not very difficult to reconcile the British approach to India with British policy toward other colonies. The difference in the approach was in tactics and not in principle. There was no deviation from Britain's determination to hold on to the Empire; circumstances, however, dictated the application of different tactics to different parts of the Empire.

By 1947, a tremendous upsurge of the will to be free was sweeping the entire colonial world. Britain had her hands full in Greece, in Palestine, in Egypt, in Burma, and in Malaya. Strikes and political demonstrations were breaking out in her African colonies. British economy was in bad shape and Britain was not militarily strong enough to forcibly crush the insurrection in all her colonies simultaneously. Though India was quiescent at the moment, Britain knew that a violent revolution was more than a possibility. The only way she could still

maintain some control over India was to fractionalize the country, to apply an extension of the old "divide and rule" policy.

So the February, 1947 statement of Attlee was an open invitation to every dissident group in India to stake out its claim for recognition. It stated in diplomatic phraseology that, if the political parties in India did not unite by June, 1948, then the British government would itself decide how India was to be divided and to whom power would be transferred. This was hardly a bid for unity. Still more important was the assurance given to the hundreds of Indian princes that His Majesty's Labor government would under no circumstances hand over its "powers and obligations" to any future government of British India. Since Britain held the power to maintain or dethrone the princes, and had the obligation to protect them against revolt by their subjects, it was not difficult to imagine the role the British government had cut out for its puppets.

To put it simply, what the Labor government was attempting to do was to create a number of Iraqs and Transjordanias in India, ruled by conservatives distrustful of any change, nominally independent but in reality dependent upon Britain for their existence. In such a divided India chances for an India-wide revolution would be slim; and Britain could handle local revolts with relative ease, by armed intervention under the guise of protecting the government that she had officially recognized as legitimate. The statement promising withdrawal from India by June, 1948 was a purely political maneuver, offering the shadow and not the substance of freedom to an India which would be divided into a number of weak principalities.

That this was the strategy was strongly implied in the House of Lords debate on India that took place less than a week after Attlee's speech in the House of Commons. Mallory Browne, reporting on the debate in the *New York Times* of February 27, 1947, wrote that "what emerged from the statements of various Government spokesmen during the lengthy debate was that, in effect, Britain planned to turn over responsibility for maintaining internal order to the Indians but hoped, and, to some

extent at least, expected, to be invited on a mutual assistance basis to continue to contribute powerfully to the defense of India against external aggression." This, when properly spelled out, meant that British forces would remain in India on the pretext of assuming protection against foreign aggression.

Mallory Browne's next sentence was even more significant. "In particular," he wrote, "it was implicitly indicated that there would be no evacuation of India and that though British troops would be withdrawn when transfer of power took place, the defense of places like the Northwest Frontier facing toward the Soviet Union was a matter of concern to Britain."

During the debate Lord Jowitt, speaking for the government, admitted that Britain was taking a "very grave risk." But he contended that this was the "best risk to take," since the British government, unable to "assume responsibility without power," had to "consider very carefully what long-term overseas commitments" she should undertake. Finally, Lord Jowitt explained that the transfer of power in 1948 would not be an "evacuation" but a "political operation."

In the spring of 1947 it looked as though the British plan was going through. The British government had already allowed some of the princes to enlarge their armed forces, and had constructed air fields and military bases in the Indian states of Hyderabad, Kashmir, and at other strategic points in the princes' territories. While the government had made demands of and concessions to the Congress Party and the Moslem League, and played one against the other, it had made no demands whatever of the princes to promote a free and united India. By skillful manipulation of the three groups in India, the British government seemed to be succeeding in imposing its solution of the Indian problem upon the Indian people. "To help force this solution," wrote Saville Davis, London Bureau chief of the *Christian Science Monitor*, "it [the British government] has gradually tightened its own whip hand as the actual possessor of powers in India with the right to choose a successor. It has brought the forces of blame to bear first on one side, then on the

other, as either one blocked the drafting of a constitution."

The most vivid picture of what India would be like if the British plan went through appeared in the January, 1947 issue of the *Modern Review*, a leading Indian monthly of moderate and usually temperate views. This was written on the basis of the 1946 statements of the British government, before Attlee came out with a plan envisaging even greater division of India:

Two Ulsters are to be created on the Eastern and Western frontiers of the Sovereign State of India by means of the hardening of the Grouping scheme through the Cabinet declaration of December 6. These will form a *cordon sanitaire* isolating Free India from her neighbors in Asia on the East and the West. It is to be noted that two out of the three major ports of India [i.e., Karachi and Calcutta] go into these twin Ulsters and the World Air Route is effectively plugged as well, at both ends, by this move. Strategically, India will be placed in a sack with both ends tied. With the Himalayas on the North and the Indian Ocean on the South, with the British Navy on guard at Trincomalee and Colombo in Ceylon, Free India would be isolated beyond redemption. If we add to this the many major and minor Ulsters that may be formed within the body politic of Free India by continuous incitement of the Native States, it would be seen that the independence of India as envisaged by the British Cabinet, at present would be a sorry jest, worthy of Churchill, Hitler, and Tojo, and nothing more.

The Congress Party and the Moslem League were also greatly to blame for the chaotic situation in India in the spring of 1947.

The Indian National Congress Party had for a long time been the premier political organization of the Indians. Until recently it harbored within its ranks members with political views varying from the extreme Right to the extreme Left. In general, the dominant influence within the Congress Party was exerted by conservatives, but the progressive element had on occasion been strong enough to have many fundamental rights of the people and far-reaching social and economic reforms incorporated in the platform of the Party. What held the dispa-



rate elements together was their common aim of independence.

After the war the conservative leaders of the Congress Party realized, as the British did, that a successful revolution in India was within the realm of possibility. They, too, feared the new spirit that had sprung up throughout the country. The Japanese had succeeded in destroying forever the diligently fostered myth of the invincible might of Britain. The success of the military uprisings in Indonesia and in Indo-China had their effect on the Indians too. There was a feeling of unity and brotherhood with all Asians in their common struggle for emancipation. Indian soldiers had fought beside soldiers of many Western countries with equal bravery and efficiency. For the first time the Indians had been permitted to join the artillery and the air force—in limited numbers, it is true—and they had distinguished themselves in fighting the Axis in all the Allied war theaters.

The Indians had undergone a profound moral and psychological change. They no longer felt that they were striving against a vastly superior force. Psychologically, they had begun to look upon their struggle against Britain as a contest in which they were sure to win. For the first time they found the British somewhat on the defensive. In their day-to-day lives the Indians behaved with new dignity, new assurance, new confidence in their ability to stand any test to attain independence.

The right wing leaders of the Congress Party were afraid of this new militancy and would not organize the people for the final struggle for freedom lest, in the wake of a successful revolution, social as well as political changes occur in India. As a result, they slowed down the pace of political activity and discouraged militant action. They eliminated most of the left wing members of the party and shackled those that remained. They took over full control of the party and attempted to win India's freedom by matching wits with the British.

Though the Moslem League had gained the support of a majority of the Moslems, Jinnah tried to maintain it more as a communal than a political organization. He persisted in his

absurd notion that all Indian Moslems comprised one nation simply because they had a common religion, even though Moslems in different parts of India spoke different languages and possessed different traditions. He held tenaciously to his demand for two fully independent Moslem sections in India, one in the northwest and another in the northeast, separated from each other by hundreds of miles.

It was G. Adhikari of the Indian Communist Party who pointed the way to an equitable solution of the Congress-League conflict. He explained the multi-national character of India, and suggested the formation of an Indian Federation composed of a number of autonomous national states possessing the right of secession, pointing out that the Soviet Union had successfully solved its much more complicated nationality problem by establishing such a multi-national state.

This plan was turned down by both the Congress Party and the Moslem League. The Congress Party rejected the idea because it was afraid the right of secession might endanger a unified program of economic development. Leaders of the Congress Party were willing to go only so far as to guarantee linguistic and cultural autonomy on the basis of differences in language and culture, but stood firm in their demand for an otherwise united India. Jinnah opposed the Adhikari plan because it would not bring within a Moslem nation all the Moslems of India. According to Jinnah, there were two nations in India—Hindu and Moslem. But according to Adhikari, there were several nations in India, both among the Hindus and among the Moslems.

Under pressure from its more progressive members, the Congress Party had in the past advocated freedom and a democratic form of government for the 100 million subjects of the feudatory princes. But, once again, when freedom seemed close, the dominant conservative members of the Congress in 1946-47 soft-pedaled their opposition to the princes and tried to win them over by compromises and concessions, fearing lest radical changes follow if they were overthrown.

Meanwhile, economically and politically the situation in India deteriorated rapidly and threatened to plunge the country into utter chaos. Britain's own economic condition took a sharp dip downwards; industry suffered acutely from a shortage of manpower, and there were loud demands for a severe cut in British armed forces abroad. Britain was less than ever in a position to cope with any large-scale colonial uprising.

Lord Mountbatten, sent to India to make another attempt to end the deadlock, succeeded in reaching a compromise solution based on the earlier British offer. The Congress Party and the Moslem League accepted the partitioning of India into *Pakistan* and the Union of India, the princes being allowed to choose between affiliation with one of these two groups and independence. Jinnah gave up his claim to the whole of Punjab, Bengal, and Assam, and had to be content with a portion of each of these provinces.

The British agreed to bestow dominion status on *Pakistan* and the Indian Union on August 15, 1947, and to transfer power to them on that date. The two dominions were given until June, 1948 to decide whether to remain within the Empire or declare their complete independence.

On August 15, 1947, the two dominions were duly inaugurated. At New Delhi, the Union of India raised its flag of saffron, white and green, with the Emperor Asoka's wheel in the center. Simultaneously, at Karachi, the dominion of *Pakistan* hoisted its flag of green and white, with the Moslem crescent in the center. Earlier, the Congress Party had warned the princes that insistence upon complete independence would be considered a hostile gesture toward the dominions. The princes also realized that Britain was in no position to support them effectively if they precipitated a struggle immediately. Most of them, therefore, agreed to affiliate with the Indian Union by August 15, 1947, although a few—notably Kashmir and Hyderabad—still held out for complete independence.

Each party to the compromise solution gained in some ways and lost in others. Jinnah gained his *Pakistan*, but without

either the mineral resources or the industries of eastern India. *Pakistan*, split into two zones with a large section of the Union of India between them, remained almost wholly agricultural. Most of the Moslem League leaders were medieval in outlook, and the citizens of *Pakistan* faced the prospect of a hard internal struggle for economic advancement and democratic rights.

The Congress Party leaders lost their fight for a united India and the opportunity to plan the economic development of India on the basis of the total resources of the country. Nevertheless, in the Union of India they had a territory larger than *Pakistan*, with greater manpower and variety of natural resources, and all the important ports. Whatever industrialization had taken place in India under British rule remained within the confines of the Indian Union. By and large, the Congress Party leaders were more modern in outlook, and the citizens of the Indian Union could reasonably look forward to a rapid modernization of their economy and a more democratic government. Chances were slim for the Indian Union to remain long within the British Empire.

The Indian princes gained a brief respite through the continuance of their internal autonomy, guaranteed by the Indian Union, but they were hard pressed by strong popular movements within their states, and they could no longer depend on British support against their own people.

The British gained an ally in *Pakistan*, which gave indications of wishing to remain within the Empire. But the Indian Union was not as weak as the full realization of the earlier British plan would have made it. Nor did Britain succeed in bringing all the princes into her own camp.

In the summer of 1947, India still remained tied to Britain, and the British government still had a few months left in which to attempt to make the tie permanent. Many acute internal problems remained for the Indians to solve, but the Indian Union, with Nehru as its Premier and Foreign Minister, was already planning agricultural, industrial, educational and other

projects, and its representatives were playing a progressive role in world affairs. Britain's grip on India had perceptibly loosened.

On August 19, 1945, four days after Japan's surrender, the democratic coalition party of Indo-China, known as the Viet Minh, proclaimed the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam with its capital at Hanoi. Simultaneously, Peoples' Committees—regional governments—were set up in Saigon, capital of Cochinchina, and in Hué, capital of Annam. The Viet Nam Republic asked for admission to the United Nations Organization and requested a UN committee to supervise a plebiscite and national election.

The government of the Viet Nam Republic was composed of the largest Indo-Chinese political parties. Eight of the sixteen members of the Cabinet belonged to no political party, while the rest represented the Democratic, Socialist, and Communist Parties, youth organizations, women's organizations, and the Catholic and Buddhist parties. The Cabinet was headed by the President of Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh, a communist. The composition of the regional People's Committees was equally broad. Thus Viet Nam could rightly claim that it was a truly national government representing all sections of opinion.

Soon after this, the two French puppet kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos shook off their chains. In a plebiscite held in September, 1945, the people of Cambodia decisively repudiated the French protectorate. In Laos, the people went so far as to depose the puppet king and set up a Free Laotian government having close ties with its Viet Nam neighbor.

Shortly after V-J Day, prospects looked very bright indeed for the people of Indo-China. Free, democratic governments were in control of the three Annamite provinces of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina, and sympathetic regimes were for the first time functioning in Cambodia and Laos. Themselves imbued with the spirit for which the war was fought, the Viet Namese expected others to be infused with the same idealism.

Therefore, on September 13, 1945, the Viet Nameese cordially welcomed British General Douglas Gracey, as the Indonesians were to welcome General Sir Philip Christison. Like the Indonesians, the Indo-Chinese faced bitter disillusionment.

Arriving in Saigon ostensibly for the purpose of disarming the Japanese, General Gracey's first act was to deputize them to maintain law and order. For a while Gracey transmitted all orders to the population through General Terauchi, the Japanese commander. Gracey also rearmed the 11th French Regiment, which had collaborated with the Japanese during the war and later been disarmed. With the arrival of British troops and French forces transported in American Liberty ships, full-scale war was launched to recover possession of the French colony from the Viet Nameese.

General Jacques Le Clerc took command of the military forces. Admiral Georges Thierry d'Argenlieu was installed as the new High Commissioner—the same Admiral d'Argenlieu who visualized this rosy future for Indo-China: "As regards the internal status of the country, it will be granted broad autonomy. Undoubtedly this will lead to the replacement of minor French officials by Annamites. Furthermore, the big financial firms will replace their head bookkeepers by Annamite bookkeepers." After taking office, d'Argenlieu remarked, with no humorous intent, that he had arrived in Indo-China "in order to protect the minorities against Annamite imperialism."

As the military assault was unexpected, the Anglo-French forces were at first partially victorious. They also managed to neutralize Cambodia by enticing its popular Premier, Son Ngoc Thanh, for consultation and then seizing him for shipment to France as a collaborator with the Japanese. But, after the first shock of surprise, the Indo-Chinese resistance stiffened to the degree that, by February 1, 1946, General Le Clerc was appealing to his government for heavy reinforcements.

The kind of popularity the Viet Nam government enjoyed was displayed in the elections of January 6, 1946, held in the midst of bitter fighting, when 82 per cent of the enfranchised

voters overwhelmingly supported the government. Particularly remarkable was the fact that elections were held even in the battle areas of Cochinchina. Earlier, when Saigon was seized by the Anglo-French forces, the Viet Nam government had sufficient influence to enforce a complete boycott and persuaded 95 per cent of the population to abandon the city.

While the French were preparing a combined land and sea assault on the Viet Nameese, the whole picture changed. After de Gaulle's resignation in January, 1946, the Gouin government, a Socialist-Communist coalition, came into power in France. The new French government took a liberal view of Franco-Viet Nam relations.

As a result of negotiations, the Convention of March 6, 1946, was signed in Hanoi by M. Saintenny representing France and by Ho Chi Minh representing the Viet Nam government. The French government recognized the free state of Viet Nam as a republic with its own army, its own parliament, and its own finances, as a part of the Indo-Chinese Federation within a French Union. In addition, the accord at Hanoi provided for the cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of all French troops in five years, and settlement by later consultations of Viet Nam's precise status in the Indo-Chinese Federation and of its right to conduct its own foreign relations.

Though the Hanoi accord brought no revolutionary changes to Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh and his government were willing to settle matters peaceably, if possible. The preliminary Conference of Dalat, held in April and May, 1946, made little progress. The Viet Nam government held out for the right to conduct its own foreign affairs and to maintain its own currency, to which the French objected and, in addition, wished to endow the Federal government and the French High Commissioner with very wide powers. Nor could the two parties come to an agreement over the number of seats to be allocated to Viet Nam in the French Assembly of States.

The French rubber and rice syndicates in Indo-China were worried by the turn of events. With the support of the French

High Command in Saigon, they quietly plotted a course of action to protect their interests.

Cambodia had already been recovered by France. In May, 1946, French troops entered Laos and crushed the resistance of the Free Laotians. They restored the former puppet king and signed an accord with him. To detach rice-rich Cochinchina from Viet Nam, French forces in that province were augmented by a detachment of the Foreign Legion composed of former German SS troops. An elaborate propaganda campaign was launched to create the impression that there existed in Cochinchina a strong nationalist movement demanding separation from Viet Nam. French police agents organized parades displaying slogans favoring Cochinchinese autonomy. Photographs of these parades suddenly appeared in France. The president of a rice syndicate, Dr. Nguyen Van Thinh, was brought forward by the French authorities to form a government. There was, however, no support from France until the conservative Bidault Cabinet was formed, following the French elections of June 2, 1946. Cochinchinese autonomy was then officially recognized, and a provisional government was established with Dr. Thinh at its head.

As a result, the Conference at Fontainebleau, which dragged on from July 6 to September 15, 1946, began in an atmosphere of tension. Pham Van Dong, leader of the Viet Nam delegation, condemned French maneuvers in Cochinchina, and declared that "Indo-China's place in a French Union ought to be founded on liberty, equality and fraternity." On August 4, 1946, the Viet Nam delegates walked out of the conference, in protest against a meeting being held in Dalat between French officials and representatives of Cambodia, Laos, and Cochinchina, where the Saigon authorities were attempting to nullify any decisions that might be drawn up in Fontainebleau. The Viet Nam delegates returned to the conference after they received assurances that democratic processes would be followed in Cochinchina.

On September 14, 1946, a Franco-Viet Nam *Modus Vivendi*



was agreed upon, though the status of Viet Nam in the French Union still remained vague. According to the *Modus Vivendi*, which was to go into effect on October 30, 1946, Viet Nam nationals in France and French nationals in Viet Nam were assured equality of civil rights and democratic liberties; equality of status was guaranteed for French property and enterprises in Viet Nam and for Viet Nam enterprises in other parts of the French Union; assurances were given for the restoration of all French property to their rightful owners; the Viet Nam government agreed to give priority to French nationals in employing technicians and experts; no internal customs barriers were to exist within the Indo-Chinese Federation; all hostile and violent acts by each party were to cease, and political and other prisoners taken by both sides were to be released; an official, designated by the Viet Nam government and approved by the French government, was to be accredited to the High Commissioner to establish the co-operation necessary to the execution of the agreement; the two governments agreed to seek the conclusion of special agreements on all possible questions with a view to paving the way to a final general treaty, for which negotiations were to be resumed not later than January, 1947. The *Modus Vivendi* also contained agreements over Indo-Chinese currency and future consultations to decide upon the manner in which Viet Nam would carry on diplomatic relations with other countries.

The Viet Nam delegates were obviously in a conciliatory mood. It was in this mood that Ho Chi Minh, on signing this document, declared: "Regarding two main issues, the Viet Nam Republic's independence within the French Union, and the Cochinchinese referendum, no agreement has yet been reached. But we are hoping to take up these questions again and find a satisfactory settlement. We [Viet Nam] decided to facilitate the revival of French economic interests in Viet Nam in return for a promise that democratic liberties will be applied to Cochinchina. . . . In the convention signed March 6, 1946,

France declared that she would respect the sovereignty and special character of the Viet Nam Republic. At the same time she is extremely interested in maintaining her influence in the world. There could be no better instrument for this peaceful expansion than the French Union which the Viet Nam will be one of the first to join."

But the *Modus Vivendi* brought no peace to Indo-China. French authorities there carried on their intrigues to force an open break with Viet Nam. On November 16, 1946, Ho Chi Minh protested to the French government that the setting up of a French customs house in the port of Haiphong to control all trade was a violation of the *Modus Vivendi*. Fighting broke out three days later at Haiphong and at Langson. During the fighting, according to the *New Statesman and Nation* of December 7, 1946, a plan was discovered on the person of a French staff officer showing "that as early as September, 1946, a decision had been made to destroy Viet Nam defenses." With this evidence of the French authorities' intention to scrap the March 6 accord and the *Modus Vivendi*, the Viet Nam government naturally began military preparations against an impending attack. On December 15, 1946, Ho Chi Minh appealed to Premier Blum for conciliation, for the return of troops to positions they occupied before November 20, and for the withdrawal of French reinforcements landed at Tourane in violation of the March 6 accord. On December 25, 1946, Ho Chi Minh broadcast that French officials at Hanoi had served him with an ultimatum demanding the transfer of the Viet Nam police to French control. When he rejected the ultimatum, Ho Chi Minh charged, French troops attacked the presidential palace.

Early in 1947, Indo-China presented the ironic spectacle of Frenchmen who had freed themselves from the Nazis fighting to strip freedom from the Indo-Chinese. The French government clamped a rigid censorship on news from Indo-China, despite vigorous protests from foreign correspondents, while it unleashed an astonishingly undignified barrage of vilification against the Viet Nam government.

On their return to Burma, the British found a country thoroughly devastated by two campaigns and three years of Japanese plunder. Cloth was almost nonexistent, the transport system was utterly dislocated, and food extremely scarce in a country that had an annual exportable surplus of three million tons of rice before the war. They also faced an Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), in which all Burmese political parties had merged, and which was backed up by an army of 60,000. While the British had promised self-government "within the British Commonwealth" at some vague future date, the AFPFL had gone on record for complete independence for Burma in the near future.

Upon his arrival in Burma in October, 1945, Governor Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith attempted to use the same rough tactics that were being used in Indonesia and Indo-China. He began disarming the guerilla force and showed open hostility to the AFPFL, characterizing them as a "totalitarian" body. Since all parties had joined together to form the AFPFL, there was no other party that Dorman-Smith could build up as an "opposition" party, nor could any Burmese be persuaded to start such a party. The Governor went so far as to bring back U Saw, who had been interned in Uganda on grounds of collusion with the Japanese, in order "to counteract the growing strength of General Aung San and the AFPFL." But shrewd U Saw gauged public temper quite correctly and refused to serve on the Governor's Council as it was then constituted. When the Council was finally formed, it included such a sorry group of British stooges with threadbare political reputations that the people of Burma registered their displeasure in mass demonstrations.

The government then launched a policy of open and violent repression, aimed primarily at the AFPFL. Members of the AFPFL were described as "*dacoits*" (bandits) and Indian troops were let loose against them. The disorganized condition existing in Burma undoubtedly encouraged some banditry and looting. It was significant, however, that the sections of the

country free from such looting were those where local authorities were farsighted enough to have enlisted the co-operation of AFPFL. Reporting this fact in a letter to the *New Statesman and Nation*, A. H. Hanson, a British officer stationed in Burma at the time, dryly observed: "Disorder is as good an excuse for postponing elections as can be devised. There exists, in fact, a vested interest in disorder."

By order of the authorities, offices of the AFPFL, trade and peasant unions, and the Communist Party were raided, and many local leaders were put under arrest. At Waw, police charged women hunger marchers with clubs. In Pegu, police opened fire on peaceful demonstrators, causing several fatalities.

Special repression was aimed at the Patriotic Volunteer Organization (PVO), created by the AFPFL to combat hoarding, looting, and the black market, and to protect the Burmese people. For example, 65 members of the PVO were arrested in May, 1946 for drilling with dummy rifles. By July, 1946 British jails housed 600 political prisoners and 22,000 accused of "dacoity." At a protest meeting in Rangoon attended by 50,000 people, Aung San declared: "We want to achieve our national demands by peaceful means, but owing to the government's action, there is very little chance of a peaceful settlement. A full scale battle for freedom may not yet come if the British give us full satisfaction of our demands. If the British, however, insist upon it, they will have it."

The British did insist. Violating their pledge of 1945, the authorities suspended civil liberties, and banned all processions and demonstrations. A faction of the Communist Party was declared illegal. Warrants were issued for the arrest of the leaders of the Peasants' Union, for Thakin Chit, a member of the AFPFL Supreme Council, and for Thakin Hla Myaling, a leader of the oil workers' union. The press was gagged by demands for the deposit of "securities" so high as to be difficult or impossible to produce. Prosecution was instituted against two newspapers and some others were suppressed outright.

This open repression produced widespread and determined opposition. On July 26, 1946, declared as Anti-Repression Day, 20,000 dockworkers marched in a protest demonstration. There was a police strike, followed by a general strike involving even government employees. Despite the timidity of some AFPFL leaders, who were worried by the growing militancy of the people, mass agitation and popular protest increased in size and intensity. At a mass meeting held on August 25, 1946, when eleven wards of Rangoon observed a one day stoppage of all work and business, the AFPFL demanded an end of repression, and Aung San presented the people's basic political demands: a national government with full powers of a responsible democratic government, and the election of a sovereign constituent assembly based upon adult franchise.

On August 31, 1946, a new Governor, Sir Hubert Rance, arrived in Rangoon, indicating a change in British strategy. The astute new Governor observed that, as in the Indian National Congress Party, some of the moderate leaders of the AFPFL, too, were growing alarmed at the increasing militancy of the trade and peasant unions, largely organized by the Communists in the AFPFL. Rance dissolved the old Governor's Council and dangled before the AFPFL an offer of six of the eleven seats in a new Council, and suggested that it would function like the interim government of India.

The AFPFL swallowed the bait and nominated its members for the Council. Thein Pe, nominated for the Council by the Communist Party, insisted that the government should first agree to allow the Council to function as a national government, and should also guarantee that elections for a constituent assembly would soon follow. But he was overruled by the other members, and the new Council took office.

There followed a period of confusion in the Burmese nationalist movement. Because of continued criticism of Aung San's policies, the AFPFL expelled the Communist Party from its ranks. To add to the turmoil the British promoted older and discredited politicians like U Ba Pe and Thakin Mya, who had

been Vice Premier in the Japanese puppet government. Not content with bringing back U Saw from Uganda, the British fetched Ba Maw from an Allied detention camp in Japan.

And what did the British government do for the economic rehabilitation of war-devastated Burma?

In 1945, the British government rejected the AFPFL demand that People's Committees be set up to organize production and distribution. Instead, it appointed a five man Civil Supplies Board, made up of two civil servants, two British businessmen representing the all-powerful Steel Bros. and Harpink Smith and Company, and one Indian businessman connected with Steel Bros. Not a single Burmese firm was given a distributing agency. The government of the United Kingdom advanced a loan of £87 million to Burma, to finance a series of "Projects" under the direction of the Civil Supplies Board. These "Projects" were assigned only to British firms, such as Steel Bros., Imperial Tobacco Co., Lever Bros., etc. The Inland Water Transport Project was assigned to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company under rather startling financial arrangements: According to the contract between the government and the Flotilla Co., the government agreed to hire the assets of the company at 3 per cent interest, plus depreciation; toward the new capital of £8 million, the company was to contribute £1 million and the government £7 million; the company was to receive a commission of 2 per cent on all profits and an additional grant of £7,000 for overhead expenses; and, on termination of the agreement, the company might buy government assets at initial cost less depreciation. What all this really amounted to was that the government employed the assets of these companies, provided a large part of new capital necessary, guaranteed the companies' profits, protected them from competition, and, through its control over wages, insured a supply of cheap labor.

The government guaranteed compensation to British firms for war losses, but made no such provision for the Burmese people whose lands had been destroyed, nor for the families of

guerilla fighters who had given their lives in the war. Despite the fact that the rice crop for 1945-46 was 2,700,000 tons as against a normal crop of 7,000,000 tons and that the supply of draft animals had been reduced to half the pre-war number, the government made no request for UNRRA aid. By the beginning of 1947, only rudimentary steps had been taken to aid the peasants of Burma, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population.

In January, 1947, a Burmese delegation headed by Aung San came to an agreement with the British government in London. Aung San carried three demands made by the AFPFL: 1) that on January 31, 1947, Britain must declare that Burma will be independent in one year; 2) that elections be held in April, 1947, to choose delegates to a sovereign constituent assembly; 3) that the Governor's Council be declared a national government free from gubernatorial veto. The agreement Aung San signed called for the achievement of Burmese independence, "either within or without the Commonwealth, as soon as possible;" the election of a constituent assembly on a limited franchise in April, 1947, to frame a constitution for Burma; the Council to function in the meantime as did the interim government of India. Britain refused to grant the Burmese demand for independence within one year. Although there was much skepticism over the British plan, preparation was started for the April elections.

Britain was confronted with difficulties in other parts of the Empire as well. There was trouble in Cyprus and Malta that required stringent measures to keep them under control. In Malaya, where the British had expected no trouble at all on their return, they were startled to find a strong nationalist movement had grown out of the resistance forces, in which Malayans, Indians, and Chinese were united, and in which women played an active part. Egyptians almost to a man demanded the complete withdrawal of all British troops from their country, and agitated for the freedom of Sudan as well.

In the post-war period Britain also faced a serious problem in Palestine, and reacted in a typical imperialist manner. Her mishandling of the Palestine issue, in fact, exposed British imperialism in all its ugliness and hypocrisy. Not content with barring the Jews who had survived Nazi butchery from entering Palestine, Britain treated them shabbily, even brutally. Those who, with incredible determination and fortitude, managed to reach the shores of Palestine in ill-stocked and dilapidated boats were unceremoniously dragged off to Cyprus. In the handling of these desperate Jewish people the British government displayed a monumental lack of imagination. To all adverse criticism of their policy the stock British answer was that no one knew how difficult the Palestinian problem was. Yet Britain herself had created the problem with all its difficulties, and the only solution she was willing to offer was the typical solution of partition—as in India—or the setting up of still another commission of inquiry! The most constructive solution of establishing an independent, bi-national state was studiously ignored by the British government. During the entire controversy over Palestine the blinkered vision of the British imperialists remained exclusively focused on strategic bases, on the Empire lifeline, and on oil.

The post-war period found the entire continent of Africa seething with discontent, and it was not long in becoming articulate. Some colonies demanded a complete end of alien rule, and even the most repressed colonies raised their voices for political reforms. The most immediate and urgent need, however, was the economic betterment of the people all over Africa; for the material condition of the people had grown even worse during the period of the war.

Throughout Africa there was a wave of strikes after the war. On many occasions the strikers made political as well as economic demands. Strikes took place in the Union of South Africa, in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, the Belgian Congo, Rhodesia, and other African colonies. The immediate response of the



colonial powers was to call out the armed forces and suppress these demonstrations.

For instance, in a town near Johannesburg in South Africa, a crowd of unarmed Africans, mostly women, were picketing a municipal beer hall. They were protesting the government ban on the brewing of domestic beer—a ban imposed on them to assure the monopoly of the municipal beer halls. Police assaulted and opened fire on the pickets, killing four men, a twelve-year-old boy and a thirteen-year-old girl, all Africans, and injuring several women; 87 pickets were arrested, and 21 were charged with public violence. . . . At Matadi, in the Belgian Congo, a general strike of transport, railway, and industrial workers ensued when the employers refused to grant the demands of African dock workers for an increase in wages to meet the sharp rise in cost of living. Here, the workers resisted when government troops clashed with them. The strikers blew up two bridges, captured and temporarily held a power station, removed tracks on the Leopoldville-Matadi railway line and erected street barricades to beat off the troops. After several days' fighting, the strike was quelled with machine guns. . . . In Eritrea and Somaliland, Italian colonies being administered by the British, civilians were shot down by order of British officers. In one instance, at Asmara, 40 were killed and 100 injured. In Mogadishu, Somalis protesting low food rations were fired upon by Sudanese soldiers in the pay of the British. . . .

The most spectacular and significant strike involved more than 50,000 African workers employed in the gold mines around Johannesburg, in the Union of South Africa. These workers were members of the African Mine Workers' Union, which for six years had vainly sought an audience with the owners of the mines. For a work-day of ten to fourteen hours the African mine worker received 40 cents for surface work and 46 cents for underground work—the same wages they had received since Cecil Rhodes' day. The workers demanded a minimum wage of 2 dollars a day.

Truckloads of armed police were rushed to the mines. They broke up meetings and demonstrations, chased and rounded up those who refused to work and drove them back into the mines at the points of bayonets. Simultaneously they raided and ransacked the offices of the union and arrested J. B. Marks, African head of the union. Wholesale arrests of other labor leaders and strike supporters soon followed. The police searched the offices of the Communist Party and the Springbok Legion (a liberal veterans organization), and arrested their leaders. Prime Minister Smuts attributed the strike to agitators and implied that the Communists had a hand in it. Investigation showed, however, that the Communists and other trade union leaders had actually opposed the calling of the strike, but were overruled by the rank and file. The strike was smashed, but, as a writer in the South African newspaper *Guardian* stated, "The miners' strike was more than an industrial battle—it was a blow for African freedom and a democratic South Africa." It was not surprising to learn that the Smuts government set up an all-white commission (another one!) to study the problem.

The French African colonies from Madagascar to Morocco were in a ferment. In Tunisia, a strong nationalist movement demanding independence and supported by the Labor Federation, was crushed by wholesale arrest of the leaders. In July, 1946, Moslem deputies from French North Africa rose in the National Assembly in Paris and accused the French colonial administrators of fraud and violence in the elections held in the French territories of Algeria, Madagascar, and the Ivory Coast. The *New York Herald Tribune's* Paris Bureau reported on July 19, 1946: "One deputy charged that the government used armed troops to intimidate voters, and that blood had been shed. 'No regime has the right to use machine guns to influence an election,' said the deputy. . . . Gabriel Citeone, Communist deputy, joined the Algerian deputies in expressing astonishment at the fact that several 100-per-cent Arab com-

munities should have registered 100 per cent votes for their French administrators in the recent elections."

There was more trouble in Algeria and Morocco, and, as the *New York Times* reported on January 23, 1946, "The storm over the British Empire' has already had echoes as far as French Togoland and the Cameroons." In Madagascar, the political pot had been boiling for some time. When French Governor-General Raoul de Coppet arrived there in May, 1946, he was greeted by marchers carrying placards: "Down with France!" and "Down with the Whites!" The pot boiled over thrice in 1946: in May, June, and December, when de Coppet "took stern measures," as newspapers put it. Finally, in March, 1947, the lid blew off. In April, 1947 it was reported that France was rushing airborne and mechanized reinforcements to bring liberty, equality, and fraternity to the Malagasy.

In some colonies, notably the Union of South Africa, a treble burden is put upon the Africans and other non-white inhabitants, by the imposition of passes and other restrictions. The spirit of rebellion sometimes manifests itself in touchingly symbolic acts like the following:

The place is Langa, an African settlement outside Cape Town, South Africa. The time is 4 o'clock on the afternoon of Sunday, August 4, 1946. It is a grave, tense moment. The time has arrived for a decision to be taken to burn the 'passes' of slavery in order that the flame of freedom may be lit.

The vast crowd of dark-skinned men and women with a few whites here and there, is hushed and motionless as the resolution is read aloud to them:

'We are determined to rid ourselves of the pass because we recognize it as the most important administrative instrument by which the Government is able to carry out its policy of impoverishing us, and preventing us from improving ourselves economically by denying us the right to move freely in search of employment in the land of our birth.

'We are resolved not to carry passes any longer, and, if arrested, not to pay fines.'

Hands on all sides rise into the air, endorsing the resolution. Passes, voters' registration forms, service contracts are passed

up to the platform to be burned. A murmur of voices like the wind sweeps through the crowd.

The moment has come. On the platform the chairman of the meeting calls upon an African woman to set on fire the passes which he holds in his hands. The crowd immediately grasps the electric significance of this act. An African woman setting the passes on fire and burning her own dramatically symbolizes and affirms both sex and race equality.

As the scraps of paper burn in a large drum, the people sing 'Mayebuye' (The Freedom of the People). The smoke from the burning passes rises into the sky to be wafted away, perhaps as a message to the Peace Conference in Paris or to the United Nations in New York.

The message carried by the wind is the same as that written on the banners held aloft in the crowd, written also deep in the hearts of the people:

"Abolish the Pass Laws!" "We Demand Equality, not White Supremacy!"<sup>85</sup>

In October, 1945, the Pan-African Congress held its fifth meeting in London. Two hundred delegates representing sixty nations and groups of African descent, coming from Gambia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, the Gold Coast, and other colonies in both Africa and the West Indies, summed up the aspirations of their people in simple unequivocal language:

Delegates of the Fifth Pan-African Congress believe in peace. Yet if the world is still determined to rule mankind by force, then Africans as a last resort may have to appeal to force in order to achieve freedom, even if force destroys them and the world.

We are determined to be free. We want education, the right to earn a decent living, to express our thoughts and emotions, and to adopt and create all forms of beauty . . .

We demand for Black Africa autonomy and independence insofar as it is possible in this one world for groups of peoples to rule themselves subject to inevitable world unity and federation . . . we are unwilling any longer to starve while doing the world's drudgery in order to support by our poverty and ignorance a false aristocracy and discredited imperialism.

We condemn monopoly of capital and rule of private wealth

and industry for private profit alone. We welcome economic democracy as the only real democracy . . .

Faced with severe colonial unrest in Africa, the imperialist powers, with the exception of fascist Spain and Portugal, attempted to camouflage repression by a change in tactics.

In October, 1946, the French government came out with a plan for a French Union embracing France and all her possessions. This was hailed by many as an ideal solution of the French colonial problem. (How often imperialist "plans" had been hailed in the past, despite the fact that these "plans" always failed to satisfy the colonial people!) Although it was clothed in high-sounding words and ringed with lofty principles, experienced colonials looked for the customary "joker"—and they were not disappointed.

The new French Union was to be composed of metropolitan France and an assortment of Associated States and Territories and Overseas Territories. The latter were, like mandates, merely a change of name for colonies. There would be three representative assemblies: the National Assembly, the Council of the Republic, and the Assembly of the French Union. The "joker" was in the composition of the National Assembly, which alone would have legislative powers and to which alone the government would be responsible. In this National Assembly metropolitan France was given overwhelmingly greater representation than the colonies. Out of 619 deputies, the African colonies were to elect only 20! The other assemblies would be mere advisory bodies. Finally, the governor or chief administrator of the overseas territories would not be elected by the people of these territories, but would be appointed by the government in Paris and would be responsible to it. As Rayford W. Logan observed in *The Pittsburgh Courier* of December 7, 1946: "In actual fact, the new Constitution creates an Empire in which the people of metropolitan France will be the first-class citizens, the people of the Associated States and Territories will be the second-class citizens, and the inhabitants of the overseas territories will be the second-and-a-half citizens."

Britain also had "plans," lots of plans. What they generally amounted to, however, was only the acceptance of a few more Africans in secondary administrative bodies without any power. One particular plan was highly fanfared as a great economic boon to the African colonials, and so might bear looking into.

Early in 1946, the socialist Labor Government of Britain announced that a Colonial Development and Welfare Act would go into effect on April 1, 1946, providing a total of \$480,000,000 to be spent in the colonies over a period of ten years. The Act did not affect India, Burma, or Ceylon, since the British no longer regarded these as colonies. Though the sum looked huge, it amounted to little when one realized that it was to be spread over a population of some 63 million. The Fabian Colonial Bureau, which included many members of the Labor government, itself had estimated that at least £100,000,000 was needed in the West and East African colonies alone to bring about any appreciable improvement of conditions within ten years. A former British colonial official, C. W. W. Greenridge, estimated that "it would require ten times the £120,000,000 . . . to develop the colonies sufficiently even to double the low purchasing power of the colonial people."

It should be pointed out that there was no guarantee that the entire sum would be spent; twice before, such funds were theoretically provided but never fully used. The Act of 1929 authorized expenditures up to \$4,000,000 a year and the Act of 1940 raised this to \$22,000,000 a year; but, during the entire history of these colonial grants, the amount actually spent had been far less than the possible appropriation. For example, in the four year period after the Act of 1940, the total amount that could be appropriated was \$88,000,000; the endorsed schemes for colonial development totaled a little over \$30,000,000; and the amount actually spent was \$8,676,000. And less than half of this amount was spent in the African colonies, where 54,000,000 of the 63,000,000 eligible colonials lived.

Moreover, the latest Act made no provision for the Africans to have a voice in determining how and for what the money was

to be spent. The periodic passage of such Acts was largely a cruel publicity stunt.

Toward the end of 1946, the British government announced the personnel of the Colonial Economic and Development Council, which was to advise the Colonial Secretary "on the framing and subsequent review of plans for the economic and social development in the colonial empire and on questions of general economic and financial policy." Included in the Council were the following experts on the welfare of the colonial people: Lord Portal, chairman of Great Western Railway and a director of large concerns; Sir Graham Cunningham, chairman of the newly organized Ship Building Advisory Committee and a half dozen British companies; Sir William Goodenough, chairman of Barclay's Bank and Barclay's Overseas Development Corporation, which controlled vast investment holdings throughout Africa; and Sir Bernard Bourdillon, former Governor of Nigeria and Uganda, and currently a director of Barclay's Bank and various insurance companies. Needless to say, the Africans expected very little improvement in their lot from this personnel.

Behind all these pleasant-sounding schemes there ran a number of significant political currents in post-war Africa. France, vastly weakened economically and militarily, pushed out of the Middle East by Britain, was desperately trying to hang on to her African possessions. The Union of South Africa, where the mantle of Cecil Rhodes had been appropriated by Jan Christian Smuts, was feeling grown-up enough to acquire an empire of its own. And Britain, with her grasp loosening on Egypt and India, was preparing an elaborate scheme of military bases in East and West Africa to oversee her interests in the Middle East and bordering the Indian Ocean.

In the Union House of Assembly on March 17, 1944, while the war against German aggression was still being fought, Marshal Smuts said: "The map of Africa today is a curiosity. There are anomalies inside South Africa itself. Here we are, a Dominion with sovereign status . . . but sandwiched we have

little territories which do not belong to us. I do not think justice will be done to Africa, unless we look at this anomalous, wrong set-up, where money is being wasted, and there is this constant overlapping, and where different policies are being pursued by different Governments." As Alexander Campbell observed, Hitler could scarcely have put it better.

It had long been Smuts' dream, shared by many other officials in South Africa, for the Dominion to exercise supremacy over the whole continent of Africa. The expansion was to proceed step by step. First would come the annexation of Southwest Africa, which the Union of South Africa took over as a mandate in its imperialist infancy, to be followed by the Crown Protectorates of neighboring Bechuanaland, Basutoland, and Swaziland. Then the Rhodesias and Kenya and other territories would be hooked on. Finally, as Smuts once put it in a rosy hue, there would be a "quite loose but highly cooperative (sic)" Pan-African system, embracing the whole continent of Africa. A sweet dream, but no more fantastic than the one being blown to pieces on the battlefields of northern Africa at that very moment.

At the San Francisco conference of the United Nations, Marshal Smuts opened the subject of annexing Southwest Africa, to the embarrassment of the British, who had their own axe to grind. So he was hushed up on the ground of having brought up an irrelevant subject. Nothing daunted, Smuts again injected the subject into the United Nations discussions in October, 1946. This time he had the open support of the British delegation and the tacit support of the other dominions, while the United States delegates sat on the fence. But unexpectedly tough opposition to Smuts' claim developed.

The Dominion of South Africa claimed the right to annex Southwest Africa on the basis that the inhabitants of the mandated territory had expressed an overwhelming desire to be incorporated into the Union. Marshal Smuts was contradicted by Senator H. M. Basner of South Africa, a progressive. Denials poured in from Africa, and Chief Festus Kandjou of



the Herrero tribe cabled the United Nations secretariat: "Please record that the whole Herrero nation of Southwest Africa do not wish this territory to be incorporated with the Union of South Africa . . ." At the United Nations sessions there was vigorous opposition to Smuts by the USSR, India, China, the Philippines, and Cuba.

While supporting his claim of aggression, Smuts simultaneously had to face a charge of discrimination against the Indians in South Africa, brought up before the United Nations by spirited Mme. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, head of the Indian delegation to the United Nations. Inevitably the issue of racial discrimination became entwined with Smuts' claim for annexation of the mandated territory, and, when the delegates to the United Nations were called upon to register their opinion, spheres of influence were forgotten, and semi-colonial and smaller countries solidly lined up against the annexation of Southwest Africa, the vote being 37 for, none against, and 9 abstentions.

Marshal Smuts lost out at the United Nations on both the plan of annexation of Southwest Africa and the right of the Union of South Africa to pass discriminatory domicile and landholding laws against the Indian population. Nevertheless, upon returning home, Smuts assumed a belligerent tone and the Union of South Africa declared that it would continue to rule Southwest Africa as an integral part of the Union, and would pass any laws it saw fit. For the time being, however, Smuts had to hold his expansionist dream in abeyance.

On October 29, 1946, the Associated Press reported that Britain was planning "the establishment of tremendous military bases on both the east and west coasts of Africa linked by a 3,000-mile super-highway bisecting the dark continent."

The plan was ambitious but not impractical. Airfields and supply bases in West Africa were already available to Britain. Takoradi, on the Gold Coast, was a huge "secret" Royal Air Force base during the war; supply bases had been established at Freetown in Sierra Leone, Lagos in Nigeria, and Bathurst

in Gambia. Airfields and landing stations had been constructed throughout central Africa. Allied forces during the war built a road from Nigeria across French Equatorial Africa into the Sudan and on to Cairo, much of which could be utilized for the road from Nigeria to Kenya. On the east coast plans were already under way to build powerful naval bases at Mombasa in Kenya and Dar es Salaam in Tanganyika. With control over the former Italian colonies in northeast Africa, this would bring closer to fulfillment Cecil Rhodes' dream of British control of Africa from Cairo to the Cape.

In the post-war period, the United States also found it had a number of stakes in Africa. Foremost among these was the virtual monopoly the United States had on uranium from the Belgian Congo. It was reported that the Belgian Congo contained one of the largest, if not the largest, deposits of uranium in the world. Through the Firestone Rubber Company, the concession secured by Lansdell K. Christie for the development of the Bomi Hill iron deposits, and the commercial port being built by the United States government in Monrovia, the United States established closer relationship with the little, independent state of Liberia, originally established by expatriated Negroes from America. The Union of South Africa also spread the welcome mat for American industrialists.

Considering all these facts, Africans faced a dim prospect for freedom in the period after the second world war.

The end of the war found the United States also involved up to its neck in the civil war in China. After the death of President Roosevelt, the United States threw its weight on the side of Chiang Kai-shek and the most reactionary clique within the Kuomintang. Not only funds, but every sort of military aid went to Chiang to build up the strength of his army and navy. But the Kuomintang failed either to knock out the Chinese Red Army or to stabilize internal conditions in the part of China it ruled.

Conditions in Kuomintang China, in fact, became worse than

they were during the war. Chinese economy became utterly chaotic, black markets flourished openly, graft and corruption penetrated the ranks of the high Kuomintang leadership, who were even speculating with UNRRA supplies, to the disgust of American UNRRA officials.

In 1946, an attempt by American General George C. Marshall to bring the Communists and the Kuomintang together ended in failure, primarily because Chiang and his colleagues were confident of continued United States support on the basis of the anti-communist attitude of the American administration. Although Marshall advised a hands-off policy in China, further aid nevertheless went to Chiang. Early in 1947 Chiang Kai-shek proclaimed that his forces had gained great victories in North China, but in the spring of 1947 he was obliged to admit serious reverses.

Late in January, 1947, even conservative Chinese businessmen no longer supported the Kuomintang. On "God of Wealth Day" eighty independent business, financial, and professional leaders held a conference at the Bankers' Club in Shanghai and appealed for peace in a manifesto that asserted: "If hostilities do not stop, the date of the total collapse of China will not be far off." But in the spring of 1947, fighting still continued in northern China.

When the war ended, the eyes of the colonial world were focused on the Philippines. For it was here, the colonial people felt, the test would come of whether American imperialism had reformed. The entire colonial world had been as familiar with America's promise to free the Philippines on July 4, 1946, as with the valiant resistance the Filipinos put up against the Japanese.

All Filipinos, including the Hukbalahap, welcomed the returning Americans with open arms. The Huks even supplied voluntary labor battalions that served without remuneration. Brigadier General Decker, describing the Huks as "one of the

best fighting units I have known," recommended that the Hukbalahap be assigned to the 6th Army. But this kind of amity was short-lived.

President Quezon had died during the war, and his place had been taken by Vice-President Sergio Osmeña, who was in Washington when General MacArthur returned to the Philippines. Osmeña was taken aback when he read that MacArthur had "liberated" Manuel Roxas, who had collaborated with the Japanese. With Roxas many other Filipinos who had been known collaborators came out in the open. The landlords who disliked the democratic policies and the platform of land reform of the Huks, the conservative officials, and others who had a stake in the revival of the old order, looked forward to its restoration by the Americans.

Upon his return to the Philippines, Osmeña was persuaded against his will to restore the Philippine Congress as it existed before the Japanese attack. Most of these Congressmen were conservative businessmen and landowners. A considerable number of them had worked closely with the Japanese and had aided in putting down the resistance movements that had also been undermining the power of the landlords. Roxas, who had served as Minister without Portfolio in the puppet government under the Japanese, emerged as the leader of the reactionary group in the Congress. General MacArthur personally cleared Roxas of charges of collaboration. The two most vigorous opponents of Roxas in the Osmeña government were the resistance leaders, Tomas Confesor and Tomas Cabili; since they were interim appointees, Roxas soon forced their removal by threatening that his Senate Committee on Appointments would refuse to confirm their nomination to cabinet posts.

By the time the elections of April, 1946 came around, Manuel Roxas had managed to gain control over the army, the government machinery and the press. He had secured the backing of business, landlord, and financial groups. Behind Osmeña was the Democratic Alliance, in which the Hukbalahap and several other resistance groups, the trade and peasant unions, small

businessmen, liberal leaders, and the Philippine Civil Liberties Union had merged. The President of the Democratic Alliance was Judge Jesús Barrera, former president of the Civil Liberties Union and an organizer of the Free Philippines resistance group.

In the meantime, a campaign of vilification was launched against the Hukbalahap. On the ground that they were "bandits" who sought to "overthrow the government and expropriate private property," American Army units received orders to disarm them. The Huks refused to lay down their arms, pointing out that there were still many Japanese troops to be disarmed, and that Filipinos who had fought the Huks in co-operation with the Japanese were being permitted to retain their arms. An undeclared war was then launched against the Huks.

On April 15, 1945, a week before the elections, the Hukbalahap leaders Taruc and Alejandrino were put under arrest. They were not released until October, following strong and persistent public protest.

Before the elections, Filipino Military Police, assisted by American MP's, started a restoration of the landlords to power on their former estates. For instance, in his thoroughly documented book *Betrayal in the Philippines*, Hernando Abaya has described how big landholders like José and Nicolas Filiciano were restored to power in Tarlac while Major Devere Woodruff was provost marshal in that province. With a campaign of terrorism against the Hukbalahap, with the landlords able once again to exert their authority over the peasants, and with American support, victory for Roxas in the April elections was a foregone conclusion.

Nevertheless, though Roxas was elected President in 1946, a few progressive Filipinos did succeed in winning seats in the Philippine Senate and House of Representatives. In the Senate, the opposition group won 7 seats; together with 4 progressive senators held over from the previous Senate, they numbered 11 against 13 Roxas supporters. In the House of Representatives,

the opposition held 38 of the 98 seats. However, though the Roxas party had a majority of 2 seats in the Senate, in reality the progressives formed a majority because 2 Roxas senators were ill, 2 others had been indicted by the People's Court and 3 others (one of whom had been indicted as a traitor) had forfeited their seats by accepting judicial positions.

To meet this situation, Roxas allowed all the Senators on his side to take their seats in the Senate, and had the Senate suspend 3 progressive senators in their absence and without a quorum. A similar measure was taken in the House of Representatives to oust 7 members of the opposition, including the Hukbalahap leader, Louis Taruc.

After the elections Tomas Confesor of the Senate stated: "Fascism is now on the march in the Philippines. The majority party senators in the opening session, determined to curtail the right of the minority, have taken pernicious anti-democratic steps. The majority senators destroyed democratic practices . . . [and] have laid the foundation of a totalitarian regime."

War and Japanese occupation left the Philippines devastated beyond description. War destruction was estimated at over one billion dollars. Especially hard hit were the industries—like the coconut oil industry—that provided a livelihood, meager though it was, for the ordinary Filipino. But the Filipinos consoled themselves by remembering President Roosevelt's promise of December, 1941, that the Philippines would receive full restitution for the war damage they had suffered.

The Rehabilitation Act, signed by President Truman in April, 1946, was cruelly disappointing. It fell short by at least \$380,000,000 of the amount needed, and provided neither immediate aid nor the full restitution promised by President Roosevelt. American interests and the small property owners received the most benefit from this Act; the propertyless masses who had offered the most resistance to the Japanese received slight relief. Besides this, the Act specified that no payment

of over \$500 would be made for war damage until the Philippine government approved the Philippine Trade Act sponsored by Congressman Bell and Senator Tydings of the United States. The Trade Act, passage of which necessitated amending the Philippine Constitution, transformed Free Philippines into an economic colony of the United States.

According to the Trade Act, the Philippines were granted free trade with the United States for a period of eight years, followed by a twenty-year period of gradually rising tariffs and an end to preferences by 1974. Maximum duty-free quotas were provided for coconut oil, copra, sugar, hemp, and other products needed by the United States. This, of course, effectively chained Philippine economy to the needs of a few American interests and put the emphasis on Philippine production primarily for export.

The Trade Act also tied the Philippine currency to the American dollar until 1974, and divided export quotas mainly among the Spanish and American *compradores* who had held export monopolies in 1941.

It was Section 341 of the Trade Act which aroused the most bitter resentment of the Filipinos. This section provided that "The disposition, exploitation, development, and utilization of all agricultural, timber, and mineral lands of the public domain, . . . waters, minerals, coal, petroleum, and other mineral oils, all forces and sources of potential energy, and other natural resources of the Philippines, and the operation of public utilities, shall, if open to any person, be open to citizens of the United States and to all forms of business enterprise owned or controlled, directly and indirectly, by United States citizens . . ." Thus, the Trade Act compelled the Philippines to amend its constitution which limited foreign ownership of Philippine enterprises to 40 per cent. By providing equal rights for Americans with the Filipinos in the development of their country's resources, it also stacked the cards against Filipino enterprises by pitting the overwhelming might of American capital against them. Nor did the Act, even as a matter of

courtesy, grant reciprocal rights to the Filipinos, who remained subject to legal restrictions in the United States.

Testifying before the Congress in support of the Act, Assistant Secretary of State William L. Clayton admitted that the Act gave "American citizens special rights we cannot give Philippine citizens, [and] ties the hands of the Philippine government in allocating quotas for certain products. Not only does this deprive the Philippine government of a sovereign prerogative, but it has the effect of giving pre-war producers a virtual monopoly . . . of most Philippine exports. It would enable them to prevent the investment of capital by new American enterprises, and new Philippine producers would not—during the life of the Act—be able to compete freely in their own country." This, Clayton added, was the price the Philippines would have to pay for American economic aid.

Typical Filipino reaction to the Trade Act was an editorial on April 6, 1946, in *The Manila Daily Standard*: "Not since Japan imposed her infamous Twenty-One Demands upon China, or when Britain presented her harsh terms upon Siam shortly after V-J Day, has the world seen such an instance of a big power shamelessly trying to browbeat a weak people into economic slavery as that represented by the proposed Tydings-Bell Amendment to the Philippines Independence Act."

But President Manuel Roxas warmly supported the Trade Act. In his inaugural address he eloquently declared: "We have in our land a few among us who would have us believe that . . . the American Republic would lend herself to the theft of our national heritage for the sake of a thimbleful of profit. My mind will not stoop to as low a conceit as that." Roxas rail-roaded the Trade Act through the Senate and vigorously campaigned for its ratification by the electorate. On July 4, 1946, the United States proclaimed the independence of the Philippine Republic. On March 17, 1947, a bare 40 per cent of the Philippine electorate agreed to commit economic suicide by voting 3 to 1 (which amounted to less than a third of the total eligible vote) in favor of the Trade Act.



The conservative and influential American magazine, *Business Week*, in its March 22, 1947 issue, frankly and succinctly summed up the events in the post-war Philippines: "Last week the Philippines paid the price of nominal independence . . . Indorsement of the Philippines Trade Act gives American business a preferential position to exploit Philippine resources . . . A few days after voting, President Manuel Roxas signed a 99-yr. military and naval bases agreement with the United States." Under the subtitle "Another Greece," the magazine reported that "pessimists predicted that the U.S. might have another Greece on its hands within a year. President Roxas and other members of his government who collaborated with the Japanese during the war are on the uneasy seat. Unable to suppress the Hukbalahap guerilla opposition by military force, Roxas will probably be loath to see the promised reduction of U.S. military garrisons." *Business Week's* comment on the Philippine presidential elections was mercilessly matter-of-fact: "The election of President Roxas was a political farce . . . Roxas . . . served in several important political posts under the Japanese puppet government. He defeated . . . Sergio Osmeña by a bare 150,000 plurality in a vote of only two-thirds of the electorate (which, in turn, is only one-sixth of the population)." With regard to the democratic procedure followed by Roxas after the elections, the magazine remarked that "Roxas' party purged opposition senators and representatives in summary fashion." And, with regard to Section 341 of the Trade Act, *Business Week* reported that "This provision has been hailed in the United States as an invitation to rebuild battered American-owned enterprises and to invest new funds."

In August, 1946, the Roxas government started a military campaign against the Hukbalahaps. Louis Taruc took to the fields and was often reported cornered or dead. On February 5, 1947, Associated Press correspondent James Halsema reported that he "met Taruc in a tiny village." In the interview, Taruc told Halsema that there could be no peace in the Philippines

until the land problem was solved. He announced that the Hukbalahap were stronger and more disciplined than ever, and hoped to see the Central Luzon revolt spread throughout the islands. The Hukbalahap preferred to attain their objectives by peaceful means, Taruc said, but they would continue to fight, if necessary, until "the ending of the feudal land tenure system."

Though they suffered many defeats, setbacks and disillusionment, people in colonies did not stand still during the year and a half following Japan's surrender. The theoretical acknowledgment of Philippine independence by the United States government was a definite gain for the Filipino people. Indonesia, Indo-China, Burma, and India made real progress toward freedom. In Puerto Rico, as in many other colonies, popular movements gained in strength and cohesion, and certain minimum reforms were put into effect. Even in the weakest colonies, even in the tiniest Pacific island, there was an awareness among the people of their rights and how to secure these rights.

Nowhere did the imperialist powers make any fundamental change in their economic and military relationships to the colonies. Even while granting freedom to the Philippines, the United States retained virtual monopoly control in the traditional manner over Philippine economy, and maintained military bases there as before. Britain made a few concessions to Indian businessmen in an attempt to win them over to her side. British monopoly control of the economy of Burma and Malaya was not only restored but, in the case of Burma, augmented by government support. France and Holland, facing strong opposition in Indo-China and Indonesia, respectively, combined military force with intrigue and bribery, and attempted to split the nationalist movements, openly declaring that their main purpose was to recover their previous economic interests in these colonies. Where the nationalist movements were not militarily weak, imperialist powers simply used force without any camouflage.

Colonial people had pinned some hope—not unmixed with

skepticism—on the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations. It was known that President Roosevelt, as Marquis Childs reported in the *New York Post* of May 5, 1945, had visualized an effective trusteeship system. Using Indo-China as an example of colonialism at its worst, President Roosevelt advocated a plan of United Nations trusteeship for economically backward countries whereby the trustees would guide the economic and political development of these colonies, over a fixed period of years, with independence at a specified time as the ultimate goal. In a conversation with Childs, President Roosevelt had disclosed that, when asked to comment on the plan at Teheran, Stalin had considered it "excellent," although Churchill would have none of it.

When the time came to set up the Trusteeship Council, however, there was solid opposition by the imperialist powers to the inclusion of any worthwhile program involving the colonies. The Trusteeship Council took over the supervision of only the former mandated territories of New Guinea, Western Samoa, Ruanda Urundi, Tanganyika, British and French Togoland, and Cameroons. No time limit was set on the length of trusteeship. The former mandatory powers were allowed to administer these territories, and to maintain troops and establish military, naval, and air bases in the trust territories. Brusquely, the mandatory powers, with the outspoken support of the United States, threw overboard the rights of the people inhabiting the trust territories. Despite the courageous fight put up by the Soviet, Indian, and Chinese delegates, the imperialist powers left the conference with their control over the trust territories virtually intact.

Colonial people observed especially the role of the United States with dismay. Not only did the United States reverse the policy of President Roosevelt, but even the statement of President Truman regarding American disinterest in territorial acquisition. In the most highhanded manner the United States proclaimed its sole control over bases in the Pacific. It did not escape their notice that the relative strength of the imperialist

powers had changed after the war, and that Britain, France, and Holland were openly counting upon the support of the much stronger United States in their struggle to maintain their colonial possessions. People in colonies were distressed when they heard powerful voices raised in the United States for a world-conquering, albeit benevolent, American imperialism. Their fears about the United States underpropping tottering empires of the European powers tended to be confirmed when they read the editors of *Life Magazine*, on February 24, 1947, urging Americans to carry the ball for the British Empire by policing such farflung places as Palestine, Greece, India, and "other hot spots."

Colonial people found added evidence of expanding American imperialism when they learned that the two Standard Oil Companies, Texaco and Socony Vacuum, had secured monopoly of oil and other mineral resources of Saudi Arabia by making a deal with its feudal ruler; that, in June, 1946, the man who was welcomed to the United States as the oil envoy of Saudi Arabia was a former aid of the Mufti of Jerusalem who spent the war years in Germany; that the American oil companies negotiated a deal with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. for distribution rights of the latter's oil products; that these deals gave the American oil companies dominance of the world oil trade, as United States Senator O'Mahony charged on February 2, 1947; and that the United States was considering granting a big loan to Saudi Arabia for building a railroad. For all these imperialistic transactions, the colonial people remembered parallels in the past history of imperialism. The doctrine of the American Century was too reminiscent of the earlier doctrine of Manifest Destiny, and the atom bomb looked like the refined version of the Big Stick. They found no reason to believe that American Marines would not follow American investments, as they had done in the past. They observed, in fact, that these economic ventures were leading to American support of the feudalistic rulers in the Middle East just as similar ventures in the past had led to American support for the feudalistic rulers of many

South American countries. And they also observed that, assured of such support from both Britain and the United States, the rulers of the Middle Eastern countries undertook, in 1946, a ruthless campaign to exterminate all liberal-minded men and women in their territories, during which thousands of workers, labor leaders, students, journalists, and professors were arrested and tortured and many of whom lost their lives. During this time, the Associated Press reported on July 17, 1946, the ruler of Saudi Arabia, who was so highly regarded by the United States government, warned his people "against any political activity." And the editor of Palcor News Agency reported in *PM* on October 13, 1946, that "Middle Eastern liberals, disillusioned about the U.S.A., charge that we adhere to a British line and hence are allied with the feudal governments against their people."

Looking at all this, the colonial people were obliged to conclude, as Edgar Snow had concluded with regard to Indo-China in his *Saturday Evening Post* article of February 2, 1946, that colonial freedom "may be determined, as issues of slavery versus freedom have always been settled in the past, by the sum of armed force the slaves are able to mobilize, by the degrees of fanaticism with which they resist, by the moral and political strength behind their struggle, and, in the last resort, by the preparedness of the revolutionaries not so much for self-government as to be machine-gunned, bombed, or perhaps atomized in defense of their inalienable rights as free men."

## ❀ Chapter VII ❀

### FUTURE OF THE COLONIES

**T**HE FUNDAMENTAL problem of the colonial people is their intense poverty, from which stem all the other ills of colonial society. It is the problem of perpetual hunger, of death from preventable diseases and starvation, of illiteracy fostered by the ruling powers to assure a constant supply of cheap and docile labor for land, mine, and plantation owners. It is the problem of an export-plus-backward-agriculture economy geared to the needs of the colony-owning countries. Any effective solution of the colonial problem must be based upon a thoroughgoing change in the economy of the colonies and must have as its goal a rapidly rising standard of living for the people.

Such a solution involves first of all the abolition of the feudal system of land tenure. The giant landowners, domestic and foreign, and the emirs, pashas, chieftains, and princes have to be laid in the dust heap of history, where they belong. Land has to be restored to the people, in whatever manner necessary to facilitate the introduction of a modern, mechanized form of agriculture.

Simultaneous with this must come industrialization, varying according to the needs and possibilities of the different colonial countries. The pace of industrialization must be swift if the people are to benefit at all from it within a reasonable length of time.

At the same time the people in colonies have to tackle the problems of illiteracy, health, and sanitation. The rate of literacy is so low and the medical and sanitation facilities are so meager that only planned, elaborate projects, undertaken

by the governments, can possibly solve these problems successfully.

The mechanics of these changes will depend largely upon the circumstances prevailing in each colony. As far as agriculture is concerned, in some colonies it may be possible to promote individual ownership of farms, each holding being large enough to make modern methods of cultivation economically feasible. In others, co-operative or collective farming with government aid may be the only possible solution. No matter how the change is made, the goal is rapid increase in agricultural production.

Basic, heavy industries have to be promoted in countries that are rich in mineral resources. Countries that are poor in mineral resources will, of course, remain predominantly agricultural; but even there light industries have to be built up. Above all, such countries must grow more than one crop, to avoid being caught in a fluctuating world market. In all colonies electric power as well as modern transportation and communications facilities have to be developed. According to their scope and the speed necessary, much of these developments have to be undertaken by the government, since private enterprise will be ill-equipped to handle the more ambitious projects.

All modern devices have to be mobilized to eliminate illiteracy. It is not enough to build standard educational institutions. Motion pictures, radio, voluntary services given in spare time by young people already educated, and other means must be used if literacy is to spread rapidly enough to keep pace with economic change. Esthetic and cultural projects have to be state-encouraged to provide for the balanced development of the new society that will grow out of the new economy.

Political development of the people must parallel economic change. People in colonies must have a voice in their government, not at some distant date, but from the very beginning, since governmental activities from the start will affect all the aspects of their day-to-day lives. Trade and peasant unions

in colonial countries have a great awareness of their political and social problems because, in fighting for better living conditions, they have always come up against the imperialist governments supporting their employers. These organizations must be intimately connected with the economic and political development of their countries.

These changes call for vast capital outlay, running into billions of dollars for each one of the larger countries like India and China, and into hundreds of millions for each one of the smaller countries. The required amount of tractors, fertilizers, machinery and machine tools, equipment for harnessing water power, developing thermal electricity, and building transportation and communications systems will cost a lot of money. Some of this capital can be raised in the countries themselves, but much—if not most—of it has to be raised abroad.

These are, in brief, the things colonial people have in mind as they struggle for freedom. Their demand for freedom is no longer only an emotional outcry against political injustice; complete independence is a prerequisite for securing the minimum requirements of a decent and dignified life.

Can these changes be effected within the framework of empires? We can find the answer to this question by considering the proposals of the British government, which is the most outspoken advocate of such a possibility.

The Labor government believes that it would be inhuman for the British to "walk out" of the colonies; that, on the contrary, Britain should stay on in the colonies "to right the wrongs done in Britain's name." With this happy conclusion reached after much soul-searching, the Labor government has unfolded a number of plans for the economic betterment and the political development of the colonies toward which "it felt a strong moral responsibility." What these plans amount to is not difficult to perceive, once they are related to the needs of the people involved.

As referred to in the last chapter, the most ambitious and



highly publicized plan is the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. The inadequacy of the fund can be seen if one breaks it down to the uses it is intended to be put. The total sum amounts to \$480,000,000, to be spent in 10 years. Of this sum, \$94,000,000 has been earmarked for research, higher education, and other general plans; \$44,000,000 has been set aside as a reserve against emergencies, and \$342,000,000 is to be spent among 60 million people living in 35 territories of the British Empire. When thus broken down, it can be seen that what looks like a staggering amount at first glance is nothing more than an annual expenditure of about 50 cents per head of the population. At this rate it is fantastic to expect any striking improvement in the lot of the colonial people. Since funds similarly allocated in the past were seldom spent in full, there is no guarantee that even this minute, ineffectual fund presently allocated will be spent in full. Besides, it has been handed over to British big business to disburse as it sees fit, as has been described in the previous chapter.

It has also been emphasized in connection with this fund that the money will be coming from the British taxpayers' pockets. This little additional emphasis seems unnecessary when one remembers the inestimable contributions these colonies have made and continue to make to British financiers, manufacturers, high salaried colonial employees, and even the British people as a whole, who received dividends, however small, in the form of cheaper goods.

Another scheme that has been much touted, paradoxically enough, as "colonial socialism," was announced by the Labor government on February 6, 1947. This plan calls for the expenditure of \$100,000,000 in order to clear over 3 million acres of land in Kenya, Tanganyika, and Northern Rhodesia and put it to the cultivation of peanuts. It is expected to develop 107 mechanized farms of 30 thousand acres each that will eventually produce 600 thousand tons of much needed peanut oil. Each farm will provide permanent employment and a village community for 300 Africans.

There are substantial reasons for doubting whether this plan is really what the London *Times* has called "the boldest and most comprehensive ever launched for developing backward territories." The plan is to be financed and sponsored by the British government, but the actual management of the project is left in the hands of the ubiquitous United Africa Company, Ltd., which has dominated the trade and stifled the economic development of West Africa since 1879. According to the government's announcement, the project is to pass into the hands of a government corporation "in due course," and then to the local governments concerned "at a time and on terms to be agreed in the light of experience of the working of the project," and then, in some remote future, will come "the more distant goal of transferring the control of the undertaking to the people themselves." In the phraseology of this announcement the bold "socialist" government of Britain displays the customary lack of a precise timetable that was displayed by its Tory predecessors in *their* promises to the colonial people.

In this plan, the Labor government also lightly passes over the unlawful appropriation of the necessary land by characterizing it as "almost uninhabited." To the Africans living in these colonies, this will undoubtedly seem like a continuation of the imperialist land alienation policy; for, according to the African, even uninhabited and unused land is traditionally the domain of the tribal group, and no one has the right to take it away.

Although the plan says much about providing better living conditions for the peanut farm workers, it is silent about wage provisions and, especially, about what is to happen to the profits from the scheme. Writing in *The Nation* of March 1, 1947, Keith Hutchison, who was enthusiastic about the project, nevertheless observed: ". . . the margin between cost, including interest and amortization, and sales price will be very substantial as long as the world shortage of fats continues. The technical mission's report, in fact, speaks of a 'saving' on the British food bill of some \$40,000,000 a year. Does this

mean that the whole crop will be sold to the British Ministry of Food at cost, so that the whole 'profit' accrues to Britain?"

It is a jest to call this "socialist" planning. The planners did not bother to consult the Africans involved, who might conceivably have wished for a plan that did not call for the development of vast peanut plantations that will admittedly go a long way to fill Britain's own need for another million tons of peanut oil a year. Despite the "socialist" phraseology, the plan is no more than a continuation of the agricultural, single-crop-for-export colonial economy geared to the needs of the imperialist country, which has been so disastrous to the colonial people everywhere.

The Labor government's policy toward political advancement of the colonies is moving along familiar paths. It is just as cautious and "constitutional" as before. No break has been made with tradition. A new constitution grants Nigeria African majorities in the legislative councils; the progress is hardly spectacular, since the council's powers are limited, and the \$200 a year income qualification in the towns effectively disfranchises the great majority of Africans. In the new Central Legislature for East Africa, Europeans, Indians, and Africans are allowed an equal number of "unofficial" seats, which is not such a great advance when one considers the fact that there are 40,000 Europeans, 100,000 Indians and 12,000,000 Africans. And so it goes, more or less, in other colonies.

It is not so much the timid pace of political advance as the whole "constitutional" approach that is wrong. The theory is that, little by little, power is being transferred to the people, and that the people can use the limited power they are periodically gaining in order to secure greater power. This is palpably false because the new "constitutions" bestow not power but only its shadow to a limited number of people in the colonies. *Even in the most advanced colonies the people are never given power over the economy of their countries or the right to change the laws that protect the imperialist vested interests there.*

Upon analysis, the British government's plans turn out to

be pretty feeble. The character of the plans is best revealed by what has been omitted from them. Nothing is said in them about curbing, much less eliminating, the British monopolies and combines exploiting the Africans today; nor about removing the African potentates whom Britain has maintained in power and who must be removed—pensioned off, if it please the British—if the colonials are to make any progress toward political democracy and a modern economy. In short, monopolies continue, Africans are still being robbed of their land, and both economic and political power remain in the unrelaxed grip of the British.

It is a grotesque contradiction in terms to call this “colonial socialism.” If the Labor government really desired socialist planning, it would have considered the Empire as a unit; it would have planned for the whole, of which Britain and the colonies would have been integral parts, and allocated the largest amount of expenditure to where it was most needed. In such a scheme agricultural production would have been planned according to the total amount of land available in Britain and the colonies together, and according to the needs of the British and the colonial people together. Industrialization, in sincere socialist planning, would have taken into account the total resources of the Empire, and would have placed far greater emphasis on developing industries in the colonies, where they are needed most. The whole purpose of such planning would have been to rapidly raise the standard of living of the colonial people in every way to the level of the British. If the total resources of the Empire were not sufficient to provide for the simultaneous development of colonial and British projects, then in socialist planning further progress in Britain would have been postponed until the colonial people had at least laid the foundations for higher material and cultural conditions of life. The Labor government has given no evidence that it is capable of even imagining such a plan.

The present British plans in no way meet the needs of the

people in Britain's colonies. But it is significant that they go a long way to meet Britain's own needs. While from the standpoint of the colonial people the plans are singularly lacking in boldness and imagination, in terms of traditional imperialism they display remarkable aggressiveness and foresight. This can be seen when we analyze the new British imperialist strategy.

Colonies have been Britain's granary, sources of raw material, market for surplus finished goods, and field for excess capital investment. Foreign trade and investments abroad have been the backbone of British economy, and the ownership of colonies inhabited by nearly a quarter of the world's population made Britain a world power. To maintain this position, she has hung on to her colonies; to retain her colonies, she has intrigued to keep the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries under reactionary governments that are tied to her apron strings.

Now Britain is in trouble. Despite all her shrewdness, she senses the possibility of losing India and Burma in the not-too-distant future. Anti-British demonstrations have become endemic in Egypt. A revolution may upset Britain's plan for continued support of Franco or, as an alternative, for the restoration of the Spanish monarchy. France and Italy are swinging away from the British orbit. Thrusting the King back on the Greek throne has been a disastrous failure. Over and above all these, looms the threat of expanding American foreign trade and capital investment abroad, just when Britain herself, heavily in debt, has to find a larger foreign market than ever before.

The highly resourceful British government has decided upon a drastic long-range overhaul of their imperial operations. India is no longer to be the hub of the Empire defense system. Egypt is to be discarded as the imperialist stronghold in the Middle East. The Mediterranean is to be given up as the Empire lifeline. If the American eagle wishes to spread out, the British are willing to let it take the Mediterranean and Greece

and the oil line to Saudi Arabia under its wing. Britain has decided to transfer her bases of operation to Palestine and to Africa.

From Nigeria and the Gold Coast in the west to Kenya and Tanganyika in the east, the British are building a gigantic network of military, naval and air bases to oversee their Empire. Africa is to become the new granary and source of raw material for Britain. Much of the groundwork for bases was laid during the war. African labor is cheap and can be kept cheap for some time to come, since Africans cannot put up any armed resistance today. With Malaya and Ceylon augmenting the East African base, Britain hopes to continue to exert her influence on India and Burma, even if these colonies manage to become free. And if the United States gets bogged down in Greece and the Mediterranean, it will give Britain a breathing spell to consolidate her economic and military position. If the United States succeeds in establishing herself as a Mediterranean power, she will be obliged to carry Britain as a junior partner. In the Middle East, Britain wants a strong military base in Palestine, and she hopes the United States will be forced to erect a strong American base nearby to protect the Saudi Arabian oil interests.

Such is British policy as it is now unfolding. This explains the royal visit to Africa and why Princess Elizabeth delivered her maiden speech to the Empire from Cape Town. It was the desire to make Africa safe for the British Empire that prompted Britain to support Smuts in the United Nations in the face of unprecedented opposition. Under these circumstances, the Africans can expect in the future not "colonial socialism" but intensified exploitation for the benefit of Britain.

The other European imperialist powers do not hold out even so minutely constructive a future for their colonies. Spain and Portugal are fascist countries. Belgium is quietly busying herself with making the Congo even more profitable for the Belgians. France and Holland are trying to hold on to their

colonies by force and guile, with the only opposition at home coming from the Communist Parties and a handful of socialists.

The colonial people are also anxiously watching the imperialist policy of the United States, lurking behind the imperialist policies of their immediate rulers.

American history has had a profound influence on the leaders of the colonial people. These leaders have learned much from the American Revolution as well as the French, Chinese, and Russian Revolutions. In the Indian Declaration of Independence there are perceptible echoes of the American Declaration of Independence. While President Roosevelt was alive, the colonial people were certain that the influence of the United States would be exerted wholeheartedly in their favor in the United Nations. They were also sure of American co-operation in terms of loans and credits and technological assistance in their task of modernizing their economy, once they were free.

Since President Roosevelt's death, the colonial people have become disheartened. Whenever anything affecting them has been discussed in the United Nations, they have found the American delegates invariably siding with their rulers. Engraved in their memories is the image of Uncle Sam grabbing a fistful of island bases in the Pacific, doling out money and munitions to the Dutch in Indonesia, the French in Indo-China, Chiang Kai-shek and his clique in China, Roxas in the Philippines, the decadent monarchists in Greece, and the undemocratic government in Turkey, and looking the other way when Franco in Spain spouts Nazi clichés. The theory expounded in influential American journals and newspapers that the United States must take over the commitments of a weakened Britain, has shocked them into a full realization of their vulnerable position. In these editorials, and in American financial dealings with economically backward countries, they have detected unmistakable signs of imperialism.

Colonial leaders know that the United States has come out

of the war the richest and most powerful country in the world. They are aware of the tremendous increase in America's productive capacity, which has prompted American businessmen and financiers to seek greater foreign trade than ever before. But the post-war pattern of American expansion abroad, such as the securing of monopoly control over the mineral resources of Saudi Arabia, appears to the colonial people as not very different from old-fashioned imperialism. They are wondering if the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the Pacific are to become the lifeline of the American empire!

The colonial people are reasonable. They have listened patiently to the explanations given by the United States and other imperialist powers for their behavior, and found them invalid. Nevertheless, because many people of genuine good will accept these explanations, they require serious consideration.

These explanations are: 1) Most colonial people, being largely illiterate and unfamiliar with the modern world, would not be able to establish democratic governments, or effectively participate in fundamental democratic processes like elections; therefore, these people must first be educated, or at least made literate, which is a long-range project, before one can consider freedom for them. 2) The colonial people must be saved from communism, and from the spread of the Soviet Union's influence.

Before analyzing the merits of the first explanation, let us look at a few examples of how democracy has functioned in colonies that have become relatively free.

In Indo-China, where literacy was extremely low, the Viet Nam government was able to hold an election on the basis of suffrage granted all men and women 18 years old or over, even while they were fighting to maintain their freedom. By virtue of changes in the land tenure system, made in favor of the peasants, the Viet Nameese produced enough in 1946 to avoid



starvation—something they were unable to do under France, even in peacetime. During the same year, in the midst of their struggle for existence, 2,500,000 Viet Nameese learned to read and write—a truly remarkable achievement.

Before the war, franchise was limited in the Philippines. In a memorandum prepared by the Philippine Lawyers Guild that appeared in the *Congressional Record* on August 2, 1946, the following description of what happened in the Hukbalahap territories during the war is given: "Left in complete control of the territories they had liberated or areas which had been unoccupied by Japanese forces, the peasants' union established autonomous local democratic governments. For the first time in their lives the peasants enjoyed the benefits of the democratic processes that had been the exclusive patrimony of the privileged few. Village Councils of from seven to nine members were elected by the village peasants, and similiar town officials were likewise elected by the town folk. The fields were cultivated and the rice harvest hidden away to avoid capture by the enemy." The memorandum then adds what happened when "freedom" under Roxas came: "These democratic gains of the occupation period that the peasants had fought for with their lives are now being taken away from them. . . . Behind the scenes . . . are officers of the U.S. Army. The American High Command here from the very first sought to crush the peasant movement. . . . This, of course, is merely a result of the over-all attempt to keep the Philippines a colony in fact, if not in name."

In an article in the April, 1947, issue of *Amerasia* magazine, Sidney Rittenberg has given a picture of a village election under the Yen-an government which is as touching as it is significant. Rittenberg, who learned Chinese at Stanford University, went to work for the Yen-an government after serving in the U.S. Army and was a field representative of UNRRA in China.

The particular village Rittenberg describes had been recently liberated from the Japanese, and had never had any elections.

Since very few people could read, and nobody had ever elected an official before, it was quite a problem to hold an election with secret balloting.

However, at a meeting attended by four hundred people, the procedure was explained in simple language. The people orally nominated four candidates for village chairman. During the following week, the electorate discussed the relative merits of the candidates. At the next meeting the four candidates, whom everyone knew, stood on a platform with a big bowl in front of each of them and a placard behind them giving their names. Each voter received three black pebbles and one white pebble.

The candidates were allowed one last speech. Not being experienced politicians, they spoke simply and to the point. One stated his qualifications thus: "I don't see why anyone should choose me. I am just old Wang, stupid and clumsy. But if you choose me I will try to clear up that irrigation business and see that everyone gets water justly, and I will fight against corruption in the village and for an equitable tax program." Another candidate, who was the village school teacher, said with deep emotion: "This is the first time in two thousand years that our people ever had the chance to say what we want and what we don't want."

Then the people left the hall and returned by another door. In single file they went to the platform, to drop their four pebbles into the four bowls. To ensure secrecy, they had been instructed to put their hand inside the bowls before dropping the pebbles. All of them followed the instructions with the black pebbles. But when they came to their chosen candidate, with a pleased look on their faces they held the white pebble high to show off their choice! The idea of an election had caught on with great success!

The school teacher received the largest number of votes. Immediately the meeting reconvened and held a spirited discussion of the election procedure. "Our people never had the chance to show whom they wanted," the teacher explained, "so when they get the chance they can't resist showing off. Next time we

must overcome this, and have a really secret voting." And so, to give them experience, village elections were held every three months, county elections every six months, and elections for the Area government once a year. This might seem childish, but it worked. How well it worked can be found in great detail in Gunther Stein's excellent book, *Challenge of Red China*.

In the elections described above, there is a significant clue: Land division, water supply, elementary education, elementary sanitation methods—such are the basic problems a newly freed colonial people are likely to face. Illiterate they may be, but they are by no means ignorant. They do not cherish disease, filth, ragged clothes and hunger, nor ever become inured to them. Living in small village communities, they can easily hold elections such as that described above, judge the candidates by their promises to take steps with regard to their basic needs, and vote quite intelligently and very effectively. As their problems become more complex they will be simultaneously gaining in experience and in literacy to handle the new problems as they arise.

To the colonial people, democracy is not merely elections, political parties, civil liberties; it stands also for food, clothing, shelter, education, fruitful employment, security in sickness and old age. Suffering from gruesome poverty, economic democracy is as important to them as political democracy. To them, a government is undemocratic if it fails to provide for the economic welfare of all its citizens. Accordingly, it is only natural that the programs of the more popular and forward-looking political parties in the colonies place greater stress on the economic aspects of democracy.

When Americans speak of democracy to the colonial people, it is too often in terms of the form and not the content of a democratic government. This confuses the people in colonies, for they see that the form of a democratic government can, and does, vary from country to country. Britain, France and the United States are considered to be democracies, but their forms of government are far from being identical. The differences in

the structure of government in these countries have been due to differences in tradition, geography, historical development, the manner in which their societies have evolved from one stage to another, the lessons they may have learned from the experience of other countries, and the way in which their people achieved democratic rights. Bearing this in mind, we can safely predict that the structure of democratic governments in a free India, China, Indonesia, and other such countries will also be fashioned according to *their* traditions, geography, historical development, etc., giving them a form different from those existing today in other democratic countries, although the content will remain the same. It would be unjust as well as impractical to insist upon one or another of the Western forms to be copied *in toto* by any colonial country as it becomes free. In fact, such insistence would be absurd, since people in many Western countries themselves do not agree in their definition of democracy. There are Americans, for example, who insist that their country is a republic and not a democracy.

Hysterical propaganda to the contrary, the most pressing problem in the colonial countries is not communism, but *feudalism*. The colonial people are beset by the same evils from which the ancestors of the Western people suffered four or five centuries ago, and must take recourse to a process similar to but speedier than that which eliminated feudalism in the Western world. Red scares merely confuse the issue in the colonies, and do not detour the people from their course at all. For whoever has a program for the abolition of feudalism and the improvement of the condition of the people will inevitably gain the largest following in the colonial countries.

The popular nationalist organizations in all colonial countries have programs that touch the bread-and-butter problems of their people. In some countries, like Indonesia, these organizations are non-Communist; in some others, like Indo-China, they are coalitions of many political parties, including the Communists. In China, the Communist Party has the support of the overwhelming majority of the people on the basis of the program

it has already put into effect. No amount of redbaiting can possibly alienate this support.

In an excellent series of articles, Foster Hailey of the *New York Times* has pointed out the kind of program the land-hungry, illiterate, economically backward people in colonies find most attractive. He wrote in the *Times* magazine section of March 2, 1947, that "it is not surprising that the Chinese Communists' program for more equitable land distribution should be appealing to the Chinese peasant, nor that the struggling Nationalist Governments of Indo-China and Indonesia should have such solid backing from the people of those countries." He pointed out that in the areas controlled by these governments "everyone at least has enough to eat. . . . In Red China, the Communists are teaching Chinese villagers through the labor co-operatives to work together for the first time in their lives. Other down-to-grass-roots programs, such as adult discussion groups and village sanitation projects . . . give the Chinese peasants a sense of belonging that the emperors, the war lords, and the Nationalist [Chiang's] Government never have given him."

Foster Hailey, who cannot be accused of communism or Communist sympathy, described the way these governments have been promoting education. In mentioning the miraculous progress the Viet Nameese have made in literacy in one year, he wrote: "The watchman in the Standard Oil offices in Hanoi could be seen every night sitting with his wife under a dim light teaching her to read and write. She, in turn, would teach their children."

The colonial people are sick and tired of "being saved" by imperialist powers from this or that imaginary bogey. Over several centuries they have been presumably saved from the Russian bear, the German Kaiser, "anarchy and chaos," fascism, and even from themselves. In the end they found they have always been saved *for* imperialism. At all costs they first want to save themselves from imperialist exploitation. The last war has taught them that the security of any one country from out-

side aggression lies only in collective security. They see no reason why, if they are militarily weak after they become free, they should not count upon the same kind of collective security that saved the freedom of their own previous masters in the war against fascism.

It is true that the colonial people and most of their non-Communist leaders have been greatly influenced by the Soviet Union; but the character of this influence is very different from what the imperialist powers imply. Unless this is clearly understood, conflicts and misunderstandings will inevitably arise.

Rulers of the colonial people have too long denied them freedom on the ground that it would take a long time for them to reach the stage the Westerners have reached through centuries of effort. It has also been held by imperialists that people in the African colonies and in many islands of the Pacific, for example, are still living in the tribal stage, and their social customs and manners have sprung from a pre-capitalist, even a pre-feudal economy; that if they were suddenly plunged into an industrial economy, they would be unable to adjust their society according to the needs arising out of a very different economy. This, it is argued, would cause disastrous stresses and strains in the social fabric of these people; therefore, changes have to proceed slowly, under the guidance of the benevolent rulers.

This is where the influence of the Soviet Union comes in. For it is difficult to convince the colonial people that it would take generations for them to achieve any tangible progress when they have the startling example of Soviet Asia before them. Before the 1917 Revolution, the Tadjiks, Uzbeks, Kirghizians, and other people of Soviet Asia were just as backward as any other colonial people. After the revolution, in less than one generation, these people have progressed economically, politically, and culturally *far ahead of any other people in Asia*.

A glimpse into the progress made by the people of Soviet Asia was given by Colonel C. E. Ponsonby, Parliamentary Secretary to Anthony Eden in the wartime coalition govern-

ment of Britain, who had visited Soviet Asia in the winter of 1944-45. Speaking before a joint meeting of the Royal Empire and Royal African Societies on May 30, 1945, Colonel Ponsonby, who can hardly be suspected of even mildly radical views, said:

Twenty-one years ago the Emir of Uzbekistan (who held his territories under the Czar), in fear of the reprisals by his poor people, who existed only for the purpose of taxation, with 20 of his chief followers galloped away to Afghanistan, where he subsequently died. Today one of his sons is in a technical institute and another a teacher in Moscow. Twenty-one years ago the literacy in Uzbekistan was seven percent, practically the only teaching being in the Mohammedan schools, and very few women could write at all. There were only one or two small irrigation schemes on the Czar's estates—there were no factories and no hydroelectric plants. What is the situation after 21 years? Now 98 percent of the population can read and write; there are 4,000 schools, two universities and several technical institutes; there are large efficient factories; huge irrigation schemes; 20 hydroelectric plants; and, amongst other things, a wonderful ballet and opera. . . .

Colonel Ponsonby might have added that in 1936 in Uzbekistan, which had a population of a little over 5 million, there were 222 newspapers, 37 professional theaters, and 564 motion picture houses. In that year, over 11 million copies of books were published, with 1,213 titles. Similar progress was made in Kirghizia, where the people had no alphabet, and an alphabet had to be created for them after the Revolution.

The experience of the Soviet Asians has proved to the colonial people that the rate of speed for economic and social change has not been set for all time in some dim, distant past. It has varied from time to time and from place to place. Economic changes have brought about social stresses and strains in most societies because of the rather haphazard way such changes have taken place. The way out is not necessarily to feed economically backward people spoonfuls of economic change, with infinite slowness, so that they are given time to survive the en-

swallowing minute social stress and strain before swallowing the next spoonful. What is required is rapid economic change together with outlets furnished for the new social, political, and even cultural impulses that such economic change would release. One suspects that those who favor the almost invisibly slow pace of change are more interested in prolonging the *status quo*.

What the colonial leaders have learned from the Soviet Union is that rapid, all-round advance can be made only on the basis of a comprehensive plan. They realize that their people have to cover a long distance within a short time, and a plan that takes into account cultural as well as economic advance is imperative. Only a planned development can be a balanced development, cushioning the stresses and strains on the social fabric generated by the pace of the change in economy. The promotion of schools and theaters, the publication of books and newspapers, has to keep pace with the mechanization of agriculture and the building of modern industry.

This is how the colonial people and their leaders have been influenced by the Soviet Union. It is not the result of "Red propaganda," but springs from the accomplishments of Soviet Asians, confirmed by all impartial observers. This influence is obviously of immense practical value to the people in colonies, and is in no way inimical to the true interests of the United States and the other industrialized countries.

Planned change in the economy of countries like India, China, Indonesia, and Indo-China would call for gigantic loans and the importation of vast quantities of modern farming implements, machinery and machine tools, and other equipment, which the United States alone can supply for the time being. If such planned economic development takes place in all the economically backward areas of the world, it would be possible for every highly industrialized country to find an outlet for reasonable trade and investment.

Such fruitful world-wide economic co-operation will, however, require a fundamental change in the foreign policy of the im-



perialist powers and in their relationship to each other. It cannot take place if countries like Britain and the United States continue to hunt for resources and markets to monopolize, as the United States has already monopolized the oil of Saudi Arabia. Such monopolies are offered only by feudal monarchs like Ibn Saud, and invariably lead to political control of the exploited countries by the foreign monopolists. Americans would learn how very little freedom the subjects of such feudal monarchs have, if the mineral resources, transportation and communications systems, public utilities, and banks of the United States were controlled by foreign monopolies. Such transactions also oblige the monopolists to keep in power those who, like Ibn Saud, grant these privileges.

Profitable economic co-operation with liberated colonies will also require the elimination of such loans as those made by the United States to Greece and Turkey. These loans are used by the borrowers to keep the people down rather than to raise their standard of living. Such loans only add to the profits of manufacturers of weapons of war, but neither bring peace nor help build the foundations of lasting prosperity.

As they gain power, the colonial people themselves are going to prevent such loans and capital investments. The proceedings of the Inter-Asian Relations Conference, held in New Delhi, India, in March, 1947, made extremely significant statements along this line.

The Conference was attended by some 250 delegates from 32 countries, including the six Republics of Soviet Asia. Japan was not allowed to send any delegates, and Communist China was unrepresented. The Indonesian Premier Sjahrir flew to New Delhi, and Viet Nameese delegates risked their lives to be present at the Conference.

Jawaharlal Nehru set the tone of the proceedings when he declared:

Ever since the news of this conference went abroad some people in Europe and America have viewed it with doubt, imagining that this was some kind of Pan-Asian movement di-

rected against Europe and America. We have no designs against anybody. . . . For too long we of Asia have been petitioners in Western Courts and Chancellories. That story must now belong to the past. . . . The countries of Asia can no longer be used as pawns by others; they are bound to have their own policies in world affairs. . . . Peace can only come when nations are free and also when human beings everywhere have freedom and security and opportunity. Peace and freedom therefore have to be considered both in their political and economic aspects. . . . We . . . support the United Nations structure which is painfully emerging from its infancy. But in order to have 'One World' we must also in Asia think of the countries of Asia cooperating together for that larger ideal. . . . Asia stretches her hand out in friendship to Europe and America as well as to our suffering brethren in Africa. . . . The freedom that we envisage is not to be confined to this nation or that or to a particular people but must spread out over the whole human race. . . . It must be the freedom of the common man everywhere and full opportunities for him to develop. . . .

Of the various reports adopted by the plenary session, the most significant were those of the committees on "The Transition from Colonial to National Economy," "Agricultural Reconstruction," and "Industrial Development." The first laid down the principle that "it is necessary that the State should be able to free itself of the dominance of foreign political influence and of foreign capital and personnel." In its recommendations for the development of a national economy it placed special emphasis on the guaranteeing of economic security by means of price stabilization, the fixing of minimum wages, and social insurance. The second committee recommended that the state should supply fertilizers, equipment, and cheap credit to the peasants, substantially reduce the landlords' and traders' share of the agricultural income, and distribute land to the landless farmhand. The third committee cautioned that "great care must be taken in determining the conditions under which foreign capital is imported;" that "imports of foreign capital should not be obtained under conditions that will result in the foreign

control of domestic economy, which would only lead to the emergence of the colonial economy under a new guise;" that "imports of capital should be obtained by the governments of the countries concerned rather than by private individuals," so that "sufficient strength could be afforded by the borrower to resist the direct and indirect domination that a lender usually exercises on the borrowing country," it being understood that the borrowing government will be democratic and not feudal or dictatorial, and that, should foreign capital be directly invested in any country, the government should consider "the desirability of imposing limits on profits and ensuring the maintenance of minimum living standards."

There are, of course, Asian rulers like the British puppet Abdullah of Transjordan, who do not share the views expressed at the Inter-Asian Conference. Nevertheless, the unanimous approval of these views indicates the presence in every country of some leaders who believe in these principles. It can be safely asserted, therefore, that the foregoing brief resumé represents the general trend of the future policy the colonial and economically backward countries will follow, no matter how painfully and haltingly.

The United States and other industrialized countries can undertake constructive economic expansion only by supporting those leaders and political parties in the economically retarded countries who have the kind of program outlined by the Inter-Asian Conference. It is necessary to understand that none of these leaders and political parties, not even the Communist Party of China, desires full-fledged socialism in any foreseeable future. What they all want is to lead their countries from a feudal to a democratic capitalist society. But—and this is important—they want a capitalism modified enough to ensure *economic* as well as political democracy. The grinding poverty from which the overwhelming majority of the world's population suffers has placed a premium on economic security. History is inexorably moving toward greater economic democracy. The late President Roosevelt had vision to perceive this trend and

to advocate an Economic Bill of Rights. Before our eyes capitalism is being modified within Britain and France, though, ironically, not in their respective colonies. The attempt on the part of the United States to impose on others the kind of capitalism it thinks best is leading it to extend imperialistic influence even over free countries like France. Such policies will not succeed. And support given by imperialist powers to such historical anachronisms as the King of Greece, the Middle Eastern potentates, the Indian princes, and the Malayan sultans, will be futile and eventually disastrous. Foster Hailey wrote the truth when he advised his countrymen: "The friendship of half the world is ours to win if we are patient enough not to force it or to dictate the terms."

Colonial people themselves will have to solve many internal problems that obstruct their path to economic and political betterment. These internal conflicts are in reality a part of the world-wide conflict between reaction and progress. For within the colonial countries there are also those who are against change and would rather keep things as they are. These conflicts, too, can be solved relatively swiftly and peacefully, if the progressive colonial leaders and political parties receive support from abroad.

Fundamentally, an unbalanced world economy still remains the greatest incubator of conflict—only in a more acute form since the end of the second world war. The poor people of the world have grown poorer, perceptibly shrinking the world market, while the need for foreign markets by the highly industrialized countries has increased. If the latter attempt to solve their problem in the manner of the past—as they are, unhappily, doing now—the result will be catastrophic. And the catastrophe will be sharper and arrive sooner, because the world has changed and imperialistic methods can no longer bring even a temporary solution to the problems facing the western capitalist countries. For in significant areas of the world, notably in Indonesia, Indo-China, and China, it will be impossible

to fully restore imperialist exploitation, and any attempt to continue such exploitation in India, Burma, and the Philippines will prove a costly failure. The example of these countries, together with the example of the Republics of Soviet Asia, is spreading rapidly throughout the economically depressed areas of the world, building up widespread militancy against imperialist exploitation. Force will not be sufficient for long to keep these people docile enough for profitable exploitation; for even the atomic bomb holds no terror to those who die by the millions of starvation.

The only peaceable way out of this dynamite-laden situation is to dovetail the economic needs of the retarded and the highly industrialized countries in a constructive manner. This will require an end to monopolies, the distribution of raw materials, agricultural products, capital goods, and credits and loans in such a manner that those whose living standards must be raised receive their necessary share.

Obviously, the United Nations offers the only medium through which such a program can be put into effect. This will, however, require a genuine desire on the part of the rulers of colonies to accept in fact the political equality of all people—without political power these people will have no control over their economy—and to co-operate in building a world in which none is deprived of economic security.

To demonstrate this equality, all colonial people should be immediately set free and taken into the ranks of the United Nations. An organization should be set up within the United Nations to offer the colonies economic assistance from a common pool, to make the most up-to-date information on pertinent subjects available to them, and to supply them with the necessary expert personnel drawn, according to their proven ability, from all members of the United Nations.

There should be no such thing as a Trusteeship Council in the United Nations. To the colonial people today the Trusteeship Council is an object of derision and distrust. It cannot be otherwise so long as the former rulers continue to remain in

power over these people. The concept of a United Nations trusteeship over the colonies has been approached from a completely wrong point of view. If the object of the Trusteeship Council is to assist the colonies rapidly toward self-government, then the first step should obviously be the removal of the present rulers, whose misrule is the reason why trusteeships have to be set up at all. The task of trustees is not to make bad imperialist governments behave better, but to replace them with transitional neutral governments under which the people will have an opportunity for growth. In truth, as "trustees" the imperialist powers have behaved so ruthlessly that the word has taken on the connotation of hypocrisy in the minds of their wards.

Under the best of circumstances the present rulers would be incapable of aiding the rapid economic and cultural advancement of the colonial people. Rapid advancement calls for intimate and unreserved co-operation between the people and those who assist them. Such a relationship can never be established between the present rulers and their subjects: the helping hand stretched out to the downtrodden colonials is drenched with their "blood, sweat and tears." The sincerity of even the British Labor government is suspect in the eyes of its subjects; for, while the government pleads lack of funds as the reason for its niggardly appropriations for colonial advancement, it has no difficulty in finding vaster sums to aid the Germans and to train and equip troops to shoot down innocent Indonesians, Indo-Chinese, Greeks, and Indians.

Instead of a Trusteeship Council, even if it were genuine, it would be far better to have a United Nations economic, technical, and cultural assistance committee. Perhaps the UN Economic and Social Council can be given this responsibility. Its staff should consist as much as possible of persons experienced in the work they will be called upon to undertake, irrespective of their race, creed, color, or nationality; and the entire staff should at least have an understanding of and sympathy for their task.

Representative governments should be set up in all freed

colonies without exception. This is eminently practical, as the Yenán government in North China has proven so conclusively by the establishment of efficient representative institutions among the illiterate and economically backward Chinese population. More than that, it has demonstrated the absolute necessity for setting up democratic institutions, no matter how crude in form, in order to gain the enthusiastic co-operation of the people in their country's regeneration. In this connection special consideration must be given to the trade unions and peasant organizations wherever they are found, for in colonial countries they are the most politically conscious and democratic in outlook.

The United Nations should also set up an impartial tribunal for the peaceable adjustment of the foreign interests in the colonies today, with the purpose of restoring to the colonial people full control over their economy. Measures will have to be taken by the United Nations to set up special quotas of raw materials for the colonial countries, to aid their industrialization.

Today the United Nations is limping along, not because it is inherently weak but because its potentialities are being purposely shunned by imperialist powers. The very fact that the UN is being deliberately by-passed is indeed the best proof of its potential strength. For, if the UN were fundamentally weak, the present colonial rulers would surely have the effrontery to manipulate it to their own advantage, and would be only too eager to bring their problems to the UN and continue their exploitation behind UN sanction. It is up to the true progressives of the world to make of the United Nations the instrument for world peace it can really be.

There is nothing impractical in Henry Wallace's suggestion that the United Nations undertake a gigantic project for the economic rehabilitation and advancement of the world. In truth, it is the only way to bring lasting peace to this tortured planet. Peace cannot be maintained by force, but only by the willingness of all people to live at peace with one another. Peo-

ple will voluntarily maintain peace when they are all involved, without any distinction whatsoever, in the kind of constructive work that produces tangible benefits for them from day to day.

This is the future the colonial people hope for and are struggling for. They will make this future a reality—peacefully if possible, by force if necessary. And they will succeed in the not-too-distant future; for theirs is an essential part of the universal struggle to remove the artificial restrictions surrounding modern technology and resources and to release their potentialities for a rich and abundant life for all mankind.



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